

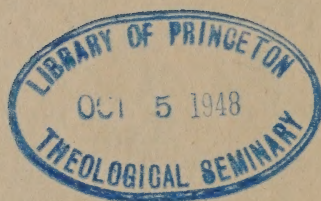
THE BIBLE

THE BOOK OF GOD AND OF MAN

by

JAMES A. MONTGOMERY

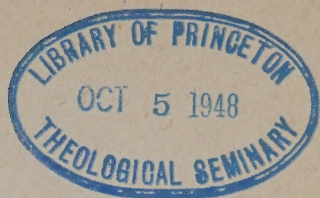
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THE BIBLE: THE BOOK OF GOD AND MAN



The Bible
The Book of
God and of Man

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CHAPTER ONE

Survey of Contents of the Bible

The Bible — the Word of God, the Holy Scriptures, His direct revelation, written down by inspired amanuenses. Such is the tradition of pious education, following implicit theological dogma, that we have been taught to think and believe.

And yet, when from that standpoint we look at this sacred Library — for such is the meaning of 'Bible', from the Latin 'Biblia', books (cf. the current term 'Scriptures'), we may well be surprised at the human contents, indeed even the human titles of those books, many of them stories of individual men and women, some romances, many political and ecclesiastical histories, largely of most secular character, in which, however, God appears as the sovereign power in the background, even as many a religious soul to-day still attempts to find Him in the cataclysms of our modern history.

The Bible consists of two volumes, known in the language of Western Christianity as the Old and the New Testament. This noun, taken from the Latin Bible, is an unfortunate term, for the Latin word was legalistic, and so with us, as in the phrase 'last will and testament', with bequests from one expecting death. Probably to most Bible readers the word is just an arbitrary, distinctive title without intrinsic meaning. But the Latin incorrectly renders the Greek word *diatheke*, which again correctly renders the Hebrew *berith*, 'covenant'. And so the titles of the two volumes in the Greek Bible are the Old and the New Covenant. The word 'testament' appears, following the Latin of the New Testament, only in the earlier English translations; a notable instance is the word of Jesus at the institution of the eucharistic feast, rendered by AV with

"This is the blood of the new testament" (so with variations Mt. 26: 8, Mk. 14: 24, Lk. 22: 20, cf. the Anglican Prayer Book). In RV the word has been properly corrected to 'covenant'. Now while 'testament' is a one man's act, 'covenant' is the agreement, contract, treaty between two parties, for example Gen. 21: 27, 1 Ki. 20: 34, 2 Ki. 11: 4, etc. And to give two examples, this contractual relation appears at the occasion when the people of Israel became party to the divine covenant, agreeing to and accepting 'the book of the covenant' at Sinai (Ex. 24: 1 ff.), and again at the proclamation of the newly found 'book of the covenant' by King Josiah, when 'he made a covenant before Yahweh,' and 'all the people stood to the covenant' (2 Ki. 23: 1 ff.). The sum of all this history is that there were two parties to such sacred covenants, the human as well as the divine, and consequently the books so called involve both God and man.

The Hebrew Bible, still the sole Bible for the early Christian Church, opens with five books, all of them possessing in Christian tradition titles of Greek origin, Genesis to Deuteronomy. In the Jewish view these five books constitute one corpus, the Law (Hebrew *torah*), held to be primary and superior to all other Scriptures, this somewhat in parallelism to the dignity given by us Americans to the Declaration of Independence (compare the call of Abraham) and the Constitution (compare the Mosaic law). Granting *en passant* the theory that all law goes back to divine postulates of right and wrong, the Deity appears in the law codes of the Pentateuch to be speaking His Word in definite legal terms. But much of this so-called Book of Law has not to do with law, but with human history, the extensive preliminaries, circumstances, consequences of that giving of law. Such history appears in the whole of Genesis and in large parts of Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. And so far the Torah is not law, but a volume of religious and moral value, indeed of general human interest

for its historical exhibitions of the relations of God and man, and as markedly so of man and man. Indeed ultimately for the modern historian the whole volume is history, for the process of law is itself an essential part of history.¹

This fundamental volume of the Bible is followed, in continuation of its history, by a book named after its hero, the generalissimo Joshua, and this by one named after the title of the dictators of the early national history, Judges. This series is then intercepted by a brief book, the historical story of its heroine Ruth, ancestress of David, the first of several Biblical books to be named after women. The political history is resumed with Samuel, named after the prophet-statesman, by Kings, a history of the two kingdoms, by Chronicles, state-archives, as the name means. There follow for the Post-Exilic age books named after their heroes, Ezra and Nehemiah, the latter autobiographical. This historical series terminated with another 'woman's book', named after its heroine, Esther, actually an historical romance.

According to modern bibliographical sense the books so far treated, as arranged in the Christian Bible, belong to the realm of history and biography, and their present arrangement is excellent. The collection constitutes the oldest consecutive history of an ancient people from its own sources, and this by the way not a folk of political importance. Unlike the standards of modern historiography it is history compiled with a purpose to teach the fear of God, social order, and moral examples. On the other hand, unlike most national history, even down to our own time, severe judgments are expressed upon the past, with the constant teaching of the need of Israel's repentance and self-rectification, if its promised destiny is to be fulfilled. From the beginning of Genesis and on man's cooperation with God is required, to be attained by the human freewill or through discipline, or else with final disaster.

There comes next in sequence a series of miscellany, mostly

poetical, all, with one exception, theological, religious, moralistic, arranged in our Bible according to the reputed ages of authorship. The first in the collection is the book of Job — The Book of the Ways of God, as Dr. E. H. Kraeling has entitled it in a recent volume (1939) — being the *conversazione* with his friends of a certain spiritually hard-pressed man, who would argue with God (cf. 23:4); the divine righteousness had not revealed itself to his experience — the great crux of all monotheism. He was 'a man in the land of Uz', the three fellow-debaters on the great topic were Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite, with a final argumentator in one Elihu of the family of Ram (2: 11; 32: 2) — these all non-Israelites, the stage so set to prove the universality of the problem, and probably, cannily, to withdraw it from ordinary dogmatic circles. Then comes the Psalter, the hymn book of the Church, according to tradition of largely Davidic origin. David's son, the wise Solomon, is next represented with three books, first that of Proverbs, consisting of discourses on wisdom, and maxims, religious and moral, for the ordering of human life. There are appended to it (cc. 30, 31) two discourses by foreigners, Agur ben Jakeh and king Lemuel. The following book is introduced with the title, 'The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.' The unique word translated 'Preacher', in the Greek 'Ecclesiastes', appears to mean 'man of the congregation' — an obscure title indeed, for the book is anything but sermonic or ecclesiastical. Along with ultimate reverence for God (see the epilogue) it is sceptical, inquisitive as to His ways and the purpose of human life, which is, according to the initial statement, the text of the book, 'vanity of vanities, all vanity.' It is a *fin de siècle* composition in Israel's experience of religion. It presents truly the everlasting struggle of the human heart towards an intelligible and so practical religion; it stands first of all for man, with God as far off indeed.

The third Solomonic book is according to its inscribed title, *The Song of Songs*, which is Solomon's. The book, still a much discussed composition as to origin and meaning, is actually a drama of two lovers, probably an example of ancient enacted comedy, examples of which appear in the recently discovered Syrian Ras Shamra literature of the middle of the second millenium B.C. For the inclusion of this drama of human love, as also of the non-religious romance of Esther in the Scriptures, we may be indebted to the taste of literati, rather than to scribes and lawyers, of men who wished to preserve such notable literature within the sacred Library. It has been preserved by Jewry with zeal for tradition because of the reputed authorship, and the Church found it acceptable through an allegorical exegesis, finding in it the parable of the divine love for the Church. It is wholly exquisite love poetry, without a peer in like ancient literature, without a religious note. It is indeed a book of man and woman.

The final section of the Old Testament is the Prophets, placed last as prophesying the future. These books are collected under the names of four 'Major' and twelve 'Minor' Prophets, the qualifying adjectives of current use having to do with the quantity of the books. In the Christian Bible Jeremiah is supplemented with his Lamentations. The titles are all personal, except in the case of the anonymous Malachi = 'My Messenger', for so 1:1 is to be interpreted from 3:1. In these Prophets we find definitely claimed direct inspiration, God speaking to His chosen men according to the prophet's consciousness with his 'Thus saith Yahweh.' And yet in these we find intruded notes of historical circumstances, and extensive historical and autobiographical records, so that it is not only preachments, prophecies, 'the Word of God', that are given, but also the earthly theatre of the inspired actors, and as well their spiritual agonies and contentions with God and man. For long historical and autobiographical sections see Is.

36-39, Jer. 26-44, Dan. 1-6, and exactly dated utterances throughout Ezekiel. Lamentations is uttered by the ego of suffering and complaining Israel. Jonah is the story of a prophet unwilling to preach the religion of Yahweh to the heathen, eked out with the prayer put in his mouth when in the belly of the great fish. The story is an early expression of Israel's irresistible oecumenical mission.

Throughout these Prophets, even Ezekiel with his supernatural claims, the human individual persists along with all the assertion of divine inspiration and vision. And so Isaiah speaks (6: 1 ff.): 'In the year of king Uzziah's death I saw Yahweh [the Hebrew has evidently replaced the divine name with 'the Lord'], sitting upon a high and exalted throne, and His train filling the sanctuary.' He sees about Him the seraphs, and hears their anthem, 'Holy, Holy, Holy, Yahweh of Hosts.' The house shakes to its foundations at the peal of the heavenly hymn. 'Then said I: Woe is me! For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, yet mine eyes have seen the King, Yahweh of Hosts.'

Brief reference may here be made to 'The Books Called Apocrypha', which are included in the Christian Bible in the Oriental, Greek, Latin, Lutheran and Anglican Versions, which further vary among themselves as to contents of the corpus. These books have in Protestantism enjoyed but a minor authority. A constitutional article of the Anglican Church (no. vi) expresses its position thus: 'And the other Books (as Hierome saith) the Church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners, but yet it doth not apply them to establish any doctrine.'² It may be observed that there have always existed various ratings for the Biblical books, even after the long disputed settlement of questions of canonicity. For Jewry the Torah is supreme, with the other books regarded as epexegetical thereto. In the Church the Gospels naturally are primary.

Of the Apostles Paul is most eminent, given a dominant position in some Protestant communions. The Church has in current use exalted the Prophets and the Psalms above the Pentateuch.

Of the Apocrypha, I Esdras, Judith, the Rest of Esther, I and II Maccabees are or purport to be history. In the class of story may be listed Tobit and the History of Susanna. The Song of the Three Holy Children, a Greek intrusion into Daniel, after 3: 28, is a psalm. The Prayer of Manasses King of Judah is a confessional prayer. Baruch, the Epistle of Jeremiah, Bel and the Dragon are connected with Prophets, but are not prophetic in their contents. Of Wisdom literature there are the Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus. II Esdras is apocalyptic.

This vista of humanity in the survey of the Hebrew Scriptures is continued in the New Testament for both quantity and quality. The earlier volume, still the sole Bible for the early Church, impregnated the new body with the idea and impulse of continuation of Holy Writ. In the new canon there stand first and foremost the four Gospels. These are attributed by tradition to as many authors, two of them apostles, Matthew and John, and two younger converts, Mark and Luke. These are biographies of Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah-Christ and Son of God of the Christian faith. They contain oral reports of the words of the Master, but these are presented constantly with the scenery and circumstances of their utterance. His teachings are all important for the faith and morals of His Church, but the life that He lived, the death that He died, His resurrection from the dead, these are prime in the Christian creed, and alone are stated in its formularies. The history precedes the doctrine. If a book were primarily essential to the new religion, we should think that its Messiah would have written one, like Zarathustra or Mohammed. But although a skilled layman in the education of His learned

people (Lk. 4: 16 ff., cf. 2: 41 ff.), He wrote nothing. He left only the ineffaceable picture of His life and the memory of His words for His followers to imitate and record. The Jewish tradition made Moses the author of the Law, the Pentateuch. No such artificial hedge arose about the Gospels. In the course of the Church's formulation of its Gospel those four books came to be selected from many essays (cf. Lk. 1:1ff.) as trustworthy and accordingly worthy of Biblical standing. For a generation the infant Church had the witnesses of that transcendent Figure, while for the future it was filled with the hope of the immediate Second Advent. But as time passed on, the Church felt the human need of rooting itself in the facts of the past, in the life of the Person who had created it, and found these providential compositions of the Gospel books a treasure trove for its faith.

There follows in the Testament the acts of the Apostles, a history of the early Church. It contains records of direct revelations, as for instance the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (ch. 2), the revelation to Paul on the road to Damascus (ch. 9), Peter's vision (ch. 10). The two latter cases are stories of the overcoming of those Apostles' so natural human obstinacy. But at large the book is the history of the knitting together of the believers, Jewish-born, proselytes and Gentiles, in a body corporate, of its inner movements and disagreements, of the beginnings of its mission to the world at large. It is in part definitely a constitutional history (e.g. cc. 1, 6, 15). These books of history, Gospels and Acts, compose over 50% of the New Testament. This proportion is about the same as for the similar category in the Old Testament; in the Apocrypha the proportion is about 40%.

With exception of one book the remainder of the New Testament consists of the so-called Epistles. Of these the Epistles of James and Jude, the two of Peter, and the three of John are religious tractates, for the most part bearing upon the life

of the Church. Of them only 1 Peter has personal references, the mark of a technical letter. The anonymous Epistle to the Hebrews has a brief salutation and personal reference at the conclusion; otherwise it is a distinctly theological, controversial document (properly *contra Hebraeos*), of the character of the Hellenistic schools of philosophy, as also its language shows. It belongs to the Biblical category of Wisdom.

The Epistles of Paul are such in the personal sense of the word. Of the seven addressed to Churches, Romans, 1 Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians have personal references to named 'saints' in the several Churches, also in cases with greetings from the Apostle's own company. There follow the properly personal Epistles, the two to Timothy, and those to Titus and Philemon, the last a particularly affectionate letter. These Epistles are almost all personal in character, autobiographical, apologetic, controversial, with greetings and reprimands to 'the saints beloved in Christ'. Mines of theology are contained in the Pauline Epistles; they are the basis of some of the most dogmatic developments of Christian thought, early with Augustine, and peculiarly so in certain Protestant Churches, but they are not mere logical, philosophical dissertations. We may note Paul's confession of his lowliness, yet his pride in the courage that comes from Christ (2 Cor. 10), and the outburst of the poetical paean to charity, in 1 Cor. 13. They are productions of an impulsive, impelling personality — somewhat like Socrates — not all Platonic dissertations.

Finally, the last book of the Testament, and the last to enter the sacred canon, is the Revelation of John. Here is Apocalypse, after the manner of Daniel and II Esdras, a wholly otherworld composition, with the exception of the particular letters which he is bidden at first 'to write' to the Seven Churches in Asia. The seer has passed from history to the vision of its coming fulfillment. Even the present is befogged, as in the cryptogram '666' (13: 18). 'In the beginning God

created the heavens and the earth,' and He looked upon what He had made, 'and behold it was very fair,' a judgment how much belied in human history. He had built His House in Jerusalem, and lo, it was in ruins. The Messiah had come, but He had been rejected of men. The seer looks afar to 'the new heaven and new earth,' and 'the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband' (ch. 22). Human hearts still aspire with that vision to the consummation of God's purpose for humanity. The book fittingly concludes the long canonical history of 'the Israel of God' (Gal. 6:16).

To sum up, the New Testament follows the ancestral trait of the Old. It too, while dealing with the things of God, and so particularly prized by the religious, who would see 'God working all things in all' (1 Cor. 12: 6), is withal most human in its composition. The Gospels tell of Him who 'became flesh and dwelt among us' (John 1:14), that is, became history, as F. D. Maurice has interpreted. This Gospel history is incomplete, imperfect, often contradictory, as all historical writing is, but we know the Christ only as the Evangelists had learned from His spectators and auditors. Acts is a Church History. Most of the Epistles are human documents, imprinted with the writer's 'I say unto you,' and concluding in part with affectionate personal remembrances. Only two of the books stand out as unimpersonal, Hebrews and Revelation.

CHAPTER TWO

The Revelation of God in History

The Hebrew Bible begins with the history of the human race along with a survey of its early ethnical divisions. It centers more and more upon the history of a divinely Chosen People from its beginnings in the chaos of ancient Oriental society and politics, through some centuries of independent national life, down to the establishment of a Church-State, struggling for existence against the surrounding ruthless Pagan powers. Apocalyptic hopes kept it keyed up to belief in its part in the consummation of the world's destiny, when God would put His crown upon His great experiment with man. Such an expression is Biblical; according to Gen. 22: 1, 'God tried, made trial of Abraham' (here RV 'proved', AV unfortunately 'tempted'). For the frequent occurrence of the theme of 'trial' in the divine operations a Bible Concordance may be consulted.

The opening section of Genesis (1-2:3) describes the creation of the heavens and the earth, then that of the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the cattle and creeping things and beasts, finally of man, male and female. This is the earliest essay at an orderly history of beginnings, however antiquated now for science, presenting as it does a process and progress in the life of the earth, if indeed not evolution in the modern sense. And to man was given the charter of "dominion over the fish of the sea, and the fowl of the air, and all life that moves upon the earth." The assertion of this proud privilege of man is unique in the common thought of antiquity. There are seemingly wild and uncontrollable powers in the universe, monsters of the waters like Leviathan and Behemoth, species

that appear to lie beyond the power of even Deity, as ancient thought held. But here all are subject to the one God. Psalm 104, the Ode of Creation, is a poetical presentation of this theology. And along with this exposition of the process of creation man stands out as absolutely distinct from the lower orders; there is no confusion, no transformation, no mating between them and man, as in Oriental and Classical mythology. One exception is to be made to this statement, the occurrence of the early myth (Gen. 6:1 ff.) of the intercourse between 'the sons of God' (deities) and 'the daughters of men'. And only twice, in two primitive tales, are animals presented with human speech, the serpent in Eden (Gen. 3), and Balaam's ass (Num. 22:21 ff.).

The climax of this story of the creation of man is reached in the assertion that 'God created man in His own image; in the divine image created He him' (Gen. 1:27; cf. 1 Cor. 11:7, Jam. 3:9). The word 'image' is one that is used of idols (e.g. Num. 33:52), and the statement is the more remarkable in that it occurs in a section that critics classify as late, Post-Exilic, from a document that is most jealous of the divine honor and distinction. The Bible, while declaring this truth about man, conversely forbids his making an image of his Creator. The continuation of the story soon tells how man fell from his high estate. But the assertion remains true in Biblical thought for the permanent divine ideal for man. According to the Gospel this ideal was realized in the Christ, who is 'the image of God' (2 Cor. 4:4, Col. 1:15, Heb. 1:3), and this ideal may be effected in 'the new man' in Christ, 'renewed after the image of Him who created him' (Col. 3:10).

The generations from Adam culminate in the 10th chapter, which sets forth the diffusion of the human race over the known world — the earliest essay at a worldwide ethnology, rough and ready as it is, with a threefold division of races in Asia, Africa and the Mediterranean world. Indeed 'Semitic', 'Hamitic'

still remain terms of linguistic classification. The long genealogies in these early chapters (cf. ch. 5) seem tiresome at least to the modern reader, having no spiritual import to his mind. But they represent the beginnings of historical systematization in outline, just as since the earliest records down through all history the succession of monarchs and dynasties, of consuls and popes and presidents, is the basis of the school-boy's education in that science. In the New Dispensation this clue of history is repeated and continued in the title of Matthew's Gospel: 'The book of the generations of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham;' cf. the genealogy in Lk. 3:23ff. Israel, along with its apparently self-centered complex, recognized early and uniquely its fellowship in human ethnology and history, the logical deduction from its belief in the One God's creation of primal man. And so by similar logic it came ultimately to discover its mission to the world.³

The story then singles down to one of the Semitic lines, ensuing in the choice of Abraham, narrowing further in the selection of his grandson, Jacob-Israel as the progenitor of the Israelite tribes, and of the nation they produced. With exceptional breadth of interest collateral lines of Abraham's descendants, the Ishmaelites and Edomites, are given space in the history, with extensive treatment of the latter people as to its tribes and royal succession, along with the quite alien Horites-Hurrians (25:12ff.; ch. 36). This patriarchal saga covers a large geographical area, from Mesopotamia to Egypt. Its historical traditions have a genuine background, and illustrate and are illustrated by archaeological evidence. The divine choice of a people worked out in an extensive theatre. Even this selection did not ignore other peoples; cf. the ancient verse with blessings of Japheth, the ancestor of Javan, that is the Ionians (9:27).

This early history has its climax in the person of Moses, through whom the charter of a definite, conscious folk-religion

was established. The Biblical horizon narrows now with the credo, 'Yahweh alone Israel's God, Israel Yahweh's people.' It was as in the case of all great developments. The womb is narrow, the offspring a babe, upon whom all attention is to be lavished, while he grows up to maturity, with his thought egotistic, as is the case with the young. As with the birds, so in this case a nest had to be made for the foundling; his individuality, separate from, naturally antagonistic to, other like beings had to be insured. Israel was to learn through hard and bitter experience that there is only one God for him with all that the relation, the covenant, implies, before he drew practically the logical conclusion that there is only one God for all. 'Other gods' are not denied in the first Commandment, only Israel may not worship them.

The ancient myth of the transgressions of 'the sons of God' with human women (Gen. 6:1 ff.) has been noticed above. The tenuous or transformed existence of these deities is preserved in the language of poetry, e.g. Ps. 95:3, 'Yahweh is a great King above all gods'; 89:6, 'Who among the sons of God are like unto Yahweh?'; and in 29:1 these beings are bidden to 'ascribe to Yahweh glory and praise.' The English Bibles disguise the term by translating with 'mighty' and 'sons of the mighty'; but see the marginal notes in RV. Strict monotheistic language is obtained by such poetical thought in the personification of the elements, e.g. Ps. 148:2 f.: 'Praise ye Him, all His host . . . sun and moon . . . ye stars of light . . . ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that are above the heavens.'

In this connection may be noted the frequent divine name Yahweh Sebaoth, translated in the Greek, Latin and subsequent versions with the grammatical 'Lord of Hosts'. But this genitive construction after a proper name, as in Y.S., is impossible in Hebrew. The duplex nouns are appositive, 'Yahweh-Hosts', reduction of the earlier and rarer 'Yahweh god of (the) hosts',

e.g. Am. 9:5, Hos. 12:6. Thus the 'hosts' of spiritual and natural agencies, representing the original 'sons of God', are summed up by this composite name in the divine unity. Yahweh potentially includes the hosts; when you speak of them, you ultimately mean Him. This is indeed a form of 'Higher Pantheism'. For Israel's approach to strict monotheism, we have to bear in mind that it was confronted physically and also morally with the evident varieties and opposites of the universe; but for the faithful, despite all his perplexities, the One God is their causator and operator.

The story of Moses laying down the law of religion and social order to his people belongs in its germ within the scope of true history. Great and permanent religions have their founders, to use a technical term of the modern history of religion. Some such early constitution of faith and practice is historically required as the embryo of the future tense individuality of that people, culminating in its mission to the world. All the other races of the ancient Near East have disappeared as corporate nations and empires. Their fundamental discoveries in literature, history and poetry, in law and political constitution, in mathematics and science — bases and precedents of our Western culture — have been recovered in the originals only within a century or so of archaeological research and tedious interpretation. But through its faith in its God, Maker of heaven and earth, the Eternal God, Israel found reason for its existence in that apparently alien world. For it the indelible memory of the past became guarantee for the future. Prophecy was the logical outcome of that history.

But that experience was travail to Israel. The Promised Land was gained and possessed by the wandering tribes only slowly, and only tediously through the impact of necessity was their unity attained. The distant parallels appear in the union of the Saxon kingdoms, and in the difficult elaboration of the American Thirteen Colonies into a nation, still containing

within itself seeds of discord, notably between North and South, as in the Biblical history. The primitive Arab-like tribalism and local communal life only slowly developed into a nation.

The traditional record of this chaotic period is contained in the book of Judges, for the most part a collection of local heroic sagas, along with two stories illustrating the disorder and disunity of the times (cc. 17, 18; 19-21). Israel had not found itself as a unity. As the book concludes: 'In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes.'

Of the two books of Samuel the first is concerned primarily with the personage of that name, himself dedicated to Yahweh, a priest, a seer, also listed as a judge, so continuing the earlier succession (1:28; 2:11; 3:19ff.; 7:5ff.; 9:19, etc.). He, like a typical ecclesiastic and statesman, aspires to domination, even naming two worthless sons as judges. He objects to the people's demand for a king, but is overruled by Yahweh, who orders him 'to hearken to their voice, and make a king for them' (ch. 8).

The chosen one, Saul, appears on the scene as a successful warrior, and at the divine bidding Samuel anoints him as 'prince' (cc. 9, 10). But Samuel is represented as standing fast by the principle that monarchy by itself would not save the people; he concludes a long oration (ch. 12) with the exhortation: 'Only fear Yahweh, and serve Him with all your heart; for consider what great things He hath done for you. But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.' The seer is made to speak in the language of the later Prophets. But such is the constant theme of the Bible, that God's will is first to be done, that politics *per se* will not save a people. And this truth Israel was to learn through bitter lessons, even as such has been the experience of every nation throughout history. Saul, the consecrated appointee, proved

a weak individual, politically and psychically. Samuel was divinely led to consecrate in private as king one of a certain Jesse's sons, David (ch. 16).

David's personal history then absorbs most of the balance of the first book, culminating in civil war between him and Saul and the latter's son Ish-bosheth; this is continued through 2 Sam. 4. The remainder of this second book covers his active reign, from the day when 'all the tribes of Israel came to him at Hebron' and acknowledged him as king (5:1ff.). The well known history, so veraciously told, needs not to be repeated here. The uniter of All-Israel, he was the founder of a dynasty that lasted over 400 years, an extent unique in antiquity, and which became the basis of the Messianic hope, continued in the New Testament as the divine clue to history. He invented a sacred and secular capital for his nation, seizing the Jebusite enclave, Jerusalem, and bringing thither the ancient ark of Yahweh as the means of consecration of the new metropolis (5:6ff.; cc. 6, 7). This became the Holy City of Israel, with the Christian Church and Islam later sharing in reverence for it and struggling for its possession, and it was the prototype of the apocalyptic New Jerusalem (Rev. 21) as also historically of Christian Rome and Muslim Mecca. The Psalms, largely assigned to David, have remained as the hymnal of Jewry and the Church. To the minds of the faithful, there appears to have been a centralization of the divine purpose upon this man and his creations with their long ensuing place in history; many nations since have so idealized and idolized their traditional, even historical founders.

David's son Solomon, the pole of his father, was a statesman, and attempted the unity of his kingdom with an autocratic rearrangement of its provinces (1 Ki. 4) and control of its political life, and with the purposed centralization of his people's religion in the great temple of Phoenician architecture that he built in the new capital, Jerusalem. There were other

sites that for their tradition might have been chosen, Beer-sheba, Hebron, Bethel. David and Solomon may have followed with archaeological zeal the local tradition of Salem-Jerusalem and the blessing of Abraham by Melchizedek, 'priest of God Most High', to whom the patriarch gave the first recorded tithes (Gen. 14:17ff). This ancient tradition is boasted of in a much later royal accession Psalm (Ps. 110), in which the new king is addressed with 'Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.' Indeed the great prayer of consecration of the temple is put in Solomon's mouth along with his blessing of the people; like Melchizedek he served as priest of the Most High God. Political unity, sanctified by a centralized religious devotion, in all which the king was the central person, was Solomon's aim and seeming accomplishment. And this sanctuary, as may have been too much overlooked, had its place in the spiritual religion of Israel. There Isaiah had his vision of Yahweh of Hosts (Is. 6). Destroyed and then rebuilt, it remained, despite all the cumbrous religion of sacrifice, 'a house of prayer', indeed with the incoming proselytes, 'for all peoples' (Is. 56:7), a prospect actually anticipated in Solomon's prayer of consecration (vv. 41 ff.). Its spiritual sanctity is witnessed to abundantly in the Psalms and in the actual life of the Gospels and Acts.

But this political and ecclesiastical unity lasted only for Solomon's lifetime. It was dissolved, there was no longer one people, but two kingdoms. This launching into the inevitable conditions of political life appeared to spell the ruin of the simple inherited religion. The world came in — Egypt, Syria, Assyria, Babylon — with all its political entanglements, still more with the moral and religious breakdown that ensued under the increased tempo of civilization, largely subject to the spell of international influences. Israel had to take its place and run its chances in the hurly-burly of the great world. There were sincere voices raised in opposition to this worldly

and heathenish cancer. 'Men of God', 'prophets', arose, of whom the most distinguished was Elijah, who denounced current conditions. There were the ascetic groups of 'Sons of the Prophets', among whom was Elisha, faithful to the ancient simple life, entirely conservative, without permanent effect. Then the 'Writing Prophets' appear, first in Northern Israel, later in Judah. They have left their testimony for all ages as Men of God speaking to men. The North perished first, and Amos and Hosea gave the reason why — it was the deserved judgment of their own righteous God upon their history. Judah survived longer, but its prophets came to pronounce similar judgments upon it, and it was destroyed as a polity.

But to the mind of the faithful God's purpose was not balked. The history of the past gave them trust for the future. The hard threshing and winnowing of Israel saved the good seed. Those who were scattered over the empires became Yahweh's witnesses in the heathen world, resulting in a great missionary enterprise with the introduction of converts from those peoples, the proselytes. Apocalyptic visions kept up hope, as supremely in the oratorio of Second Isaiah, who foresaw the glorification of Sion as the world's illuminator (e.g. Is. 60: 1ff.), but along with the desiderated 'new heavens and new earth' (65:17; 66:22). There was the humble restoration of Judah as fief of the empires, Persia and Greece and Rome. A church-state was established with unsuccessful attempts at monarchy in the Hasmonaeans and Herods. There came the final destruction of the nation by Rome. But the essence of Israel survived in its dispersion over the world, and so in the 'sect' that arose out of it, its daughter, the Christian Church. (For the indifferent application of the word 'sect' to the parties in Judaism see Acts 5:17; 15:5; 24:5; 26:5; 28:22). The Church itself was to go through similar experiences in its long history, rising to imperial position as in the Greek and the Latin world, in the latter with imperial Rome as the centre,

later with commanding position as the established church in the several Protestant lands. Only in fairly modern times is the Church with its spiritual mission coming to be disentangled from the world of politics. It is of interest, when one views the repetitions of history, that Rome still remains a distinct enclave within the kingdom of Italy, a Holy City, a New Jerusalem.

The New Testament begins with the history of a Man, of the divine Word become flesh. It is notable that Luke, with Greek precision, gives the imperial dating for the appearance of Jesus as 'in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar,' this statement followed with the names of three contemporary tetrarchs and two highpriests (3:1f.). The Church in its creeds, the Apostles' and the Nicene, has with like historical sense included the statement that Jesus 'suffered under Pontius Pilate,' making the event of oecumenical importance. The four Gospels are continued by Acts, the history of His early Church; these five books make up, as we have already observed, about 50% of the Testament, which is about the same proportion as the history in the Old Testament. If we were to include the Epistles, or their sections, of personal import, especially those of Paul with his abounding ego (which occurs in his letter to the Romans in the nominative case 78 times) the proportion of history is greatly extended, as though with a volume of 'Life and Letters of Paul'. According to His own Gospel, Jesus as the Messiah-Christ is the long promised historical fulfillment of ancient prophecy and expectation. But that history was completed, and so Gospels and Epistles and John's Apocalypse give prospect of the early divine consummation of all history. However fragile such hopes were — the Church itself had to become a political corporation itself in order to survive and help the world to survive — after all, such has been the sequence of thought with philosophic students of history, since Plato's *Republic*, and down to Hobbes

and Rousseau and Marx, and to our day with plans of setting the world right, as after World War I, and so idealists again after World War II. Such prospectuses may be largely in vain, but they represent the inextinguishable human faith, at least hope, of ultimately religious foundation, for a meaning and purpose in history, for 'God's in His Heavens, All's right in the world.' There is no basis for such a belief in science or history. Others, more sceptical, may call it wishful thinking.

The corollary to the part of history in the divine revelation asserted in the Bible has not been generally recognized. Its religion has given the world monotheism, and modern students of the history of religion express the result with more *finesse* as ethical monotheism. But other monotheisms have arisen, largely through philosophic thought and the logic of a unity demanded for the universe — a scientific monotheism. This for example in the Greek and Latin philosophers, who greatly helped in preparing the way for the Gentile acceptance of the new religion through Jewish proselytes and then Christian initiates. And all religions have been ethical. But the distinguishing characteristic of the Biblical religion is that it proclaims the revelation of God in history. Just as the harmony of the celestial spheres declares the glory of God (Ps. 19 — a poet's anticipation of astronomy), so the historical experience of 'the people of God' found one divine purpose working however inscrutably through the chaos of human events, first in its own folk-experience and then with unselfish outlook for the world. The experience of the Israel of God was the first to find a unity and purpose in history.

CHAPTER THREE

The Bible: A Book of Humanity

The present writer was brought up at home, in the Church, and at school on the Holy Scriptures. Equally through school and college he had the old-fashioned thorough training in the Classics. For him as a youth the Bible appeared as a sanctified area, in which no distinctions might be made. The usual literary classifications of story and saga and history, of law-books and poetry and philosophy, were hardly recognized in that sacred field, except so far as juvenile interest was fascinated by some portions over others that were dull to him. The divine aura dominated, the human element existed merely as medium or objective of the divine, or as example of life, in naughty extremes as awful cases of sin, from which, as he observed, the Biblical heroes and heroines were not exempt, and he wondered why such stories were told in Holy Writ. The Bible was a book of divinity. On the other hand the profane Classics appeared most human, with the lusty heroes and heroines in the epics, just like the gods and goddesses whose society they enjoyed, the adventures by sea and by land, and then man and woman presented in grand style in tragedy and comedy, while the philosophy of the Greeks was fundamental in the discovery of the human self and his world, with the divine often only a faraway ultimate.

But the Bible is equally a book of humanity. It differs indeed from the Classics, being Oriental and Semitic, more primitive in its antecedents, less logical, not presented in visible dramatic form nor featured in native art. But in its human example, it as truly, and indeed more simply, exhibits men and women. This human phase has indeed long been recognized by critics,

and their results have been taken up by sceptics to minimize the value of the Bible — most naturally after the long traditional practice of theologizing the Bible merely as a sacred *unicum*. But it is rather this very phase of the humanity of the Bible that has endeared it unconsciously to its readers, and that sets it apart from the scriptures of the other great world religions.⁴

All those books present the divine alone as their origin. Of them typical is the Koran, the religion of which is wholly dependent upon Judaism and Christianity. But that volume is represented as the book divinely written, which was read by the Prophet, and then transferred by him to human script. 'This is the Book,' one to be read, so the second chapter opens, and the same title appears constantly throughout the volume. We may compare in the history of American religion the Book of Mormon, and other like volumes. In contrast the only Biblical assignment of writing in the divine hand is the case of the Tables of the Covenant (Ex. 32:16. Dt. 5:22). And further the Koran is without historical knowledge and flavor, containing only references to apocryphal Jewish and Christian history, these indeed grossly mishandled, and with no contemporary allusions as to events and persons. We obtain some personal knowledge of its circumstances only by tiresome wading through the Commentaries on the Koran — Midrash after the Jewish term. How different is the very human figure of Moses, child of the bulrushes, Man of God, pictured in circumstances largely approved by archeology. Of him more will be said in the next Chapter.

The Messiah of the New Testament is presented by the almost contemporary records of the Gospels, written within about a generation. It is a human figure that we behold, even more than His words that we hear. We see Him as He walks the countryside and the city streets, in his conversation with named men and women. His discussions with disciples and

doubters and enemies. He is not a receiver of oracles, like Mohammed, with three exceptions: when at His baptism 'He saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him; and lo, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased' (Mt. 3: 16, and parallels): a similar 'voice' in the scene of the transfiguration (Mt. 17: 5 and parallels): and again in the hearing of the multitude 'a voice out of heaven' in response to His petition, 'Father, glorify Thy name!' (Jn. 12:23ff.). According to the accounts these manifestations had their witnesses. He is a teacher, rabbi ('Rabboni', as the Aramaic title is preserved in Jn. 20:16) of accepted authority, and His words are presented in their actual setting, whether He speaks to His disciples at large or individually, to gentry and commoners, men and women, scribes and lawyers, to the Jewish highpriests and the Roman governor, and at last His words on the cross, one to a fellow convict, 'a malefactor'.

Islamic art allows no portraiture, but if it did it could give no authentic scenes of the Prophet's life. How contrasted is the chief Figure of Christian art vividly presented in the Gospels from His birth to His death and resurrection, and always in company with the men and women and children, the groups friendly and hostile, that made his milieu. His teachings addressed to such human beings are contained in the Gospels, which are primarily biographies. His life is of prior importance to His words; He is the Word.

Again in contrast to Mohammed's experiences, it may be observed that the Gospels give few cases of Jesus' isolation from the world. He is presented as in absolute seclusion only in the scene of the forty days of His temptation in the wilderness (Mt. 4:1ff., Mk. 1:12f., Lk. 4:1ff.), and for one night when He went off to the highlands to pray, the event being told only incidentally (Mt. 14:22ff., Mk. 6:45ff., Lk. 6:12ff., Jn. 6:15ff.). He is accompanied by disciples in the scene of

the transfiguration, and again in His sufferings in the garden of Gethsemane on the eve of His death. His life, as so portrayed, is different indeed from that of the mystics of religion, for example in the case of His herald, John the Baptist. The point is, not that He was not accustomed to such separations from the world, but that the Gospel story presents only the visible facts of His life. There is actually a vacancy in the story between the time of His becoming 'a son of the Law' at twelve years of age and His thirtieth year (Lk. 2:41ff.; 3:23). We might have expected the early invention of apocryphal material to fill the blank. Later indeed the vacancy was filled out with stories of His infancy, for example the Gospel of Thomas and the Protevangel of James.

The term 'story' is here intentionally used. The word goes back to Latin 'historia', whence our 'history', today regarded as a science, while the former popularized derivative has come to be used for popular tales, even as synonym for 'lie'. What a history for the word! History in its modern scientific sense relies primarily on contemporary sources, that can be docketed, ancient history on the official chronicles and legal documents that have been preserved. Such chronicles — 'matters of the days', i.e. 'diaries' (such is the Hebrew title of the book with that name) appear frequently cited in Kings as official records, in parallelism with the far older annalistic records of Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, the Hittites. In proportion to those extensive official annals the excerpts presented in the corresponding Biblical literature appear meagre indeed. But the story — Hebrew 'midrash' (e.g. 2 Ch. 13:22, EVV 'commentary', after the Latin sense of the word, e.g. Cæsar's *Commentarii*), legend, tradition, saga, however variously we may distinguish its phases, preserves its own historical value in presenting the life of the ancient past. Not only kings and queens and royal lines with their dates, the succession of popes and premiers and presidents, outstanding notables, wars and political events,

of the kind that any school book of history presents, often in dry chronological tables, but the life of the people, the story of everyday life, at large is equally a desideratum of history. Indeed our modern historians are more and more coming to realize the need of envisaging the whole scenery of the life and times under consideration.

Historical criticism may rightly question and dispute over the historicity of, for instance, the patriarchal stories. But archaeological evidence is largely approving them as illustrating the life of the ancient past, as true to life, however dubious for historical fact. The wealth of archaeological evidence now recovered in the tablets and inscriptions of the ancient Orient reveals desiderated collectanea of exact contemporary details in dates and names and processes of law, but the Biblical story ekes out those outlines with the panorama of the human scenery, personal and unvarnished, as no other ancient literature does for most of the stage it covers. The Book which would reveal God also reveals man.

The Book of Genesis is on the whole a story of personalities and their circumstances, mostly in family life. Moses is a real man, however much his figure has been clouded with claims of divine manifestation, and the piling up of extensive law codes, constitutionally attributed to him, in parallelism with traditions concerning other ancient lawgivers. And in continuance, throughout the subsequent history in Palestine, along with the reliable archival data in Kings, it is stories of personalities, of men and women, that stand forth. These stories are objectively told, of warriors, judges, kings and queens and their society, nobles and commoners. The true history of David — no saint as he was later sanctified in Christian hagiology — of Solomon, the one somewhat imperial figure, builder of the temple, idealized later as Wise Man, yet with his enormous alien harem and recognition of his wives' gods — it is all presented with objective criticism. The subsequent

revolt of the North, although condemned by the Judaeen historians, and in fact subsequently a failure, is given divine justification; the Davidic kingdom had become wordly, — like the later Holy Roman Church. Similarly the tragic end of the Judaeen kingdom is truly told in the books of Kings and Jeremiah.

Further, unlike the other ancient records, there is the constant appearance of individuals of minor social rank, not even of the sacred orders, who claim personal inspiration from Deity. They correspond in the history of religion with the Pagan oracles, mostly originating in shrines. But in the Biblical history these seers (the old title), prophets are personalities, with extensive anecdotes narrated about some of them. Elijah and Elisha are outstanding among these. Quite human stories are narrated about of them. There is the sad tale of the prophet at Bethel, who for his disobedience to the divine command was killed by a lion (1 Ki. 12), and the dramatic scene of the rival pronouncements of the prophets Zedekiah and Micaiah in 1 Ki. 22. The 'Writing Prophets' have been considered above in Chapter One. They stand for the general Biblical position that God speaks through chosen men, at times driving them to their duty, and not through oracular and mechanical means, like Urim and Thummim. Their personalities and circumstances are exhibited in their writings, in cases by external anecdotes. The Wise Men laid no such claim to inspiration. They attempted to work out for themselves and their students, with query and scepticism, the practical logic of the revealed religion, 'the fear of Yahweh'.

In Christian thought and language there has prevailed for the leading characters in the New Testament the title of 'saints'. Such reverence to the Apostles and other distinguished colleagues is natural. But the usage has befogged the actual humanity of those worthies. As in the dedications of many of the Epistles, 'saints' is used at large of the members of the

church addressed, who have become 'holy, consecrated', in the fellowship of Jesus Christ. The term was primarily ecclesiastical, not moral; as shown by doubting Thomas, Peter who thrice denied his Master, and others such are eminent in the Gospels. The contentions of the Apostles in Acts exhibit the actual humanity of the several leaders of the early Church. In the first corporate act of the Church at large (Acts 15) the differences of opinion, the conflicts of personality, were evident, as in the history of all constitutional development, ecclesiastical as well as political. Good Christians have ever since wondered why there was not more unity, or love at least, in the beginnings of the Church. But such is the character of all human history, and the more intensely so when highest ideals are involved. Hence was born out of his ecclesiastical experiences Paul's lyrical encomium of charity as the greatest of the three Christian graces (1 Cor. 13).

CHAPTER FOUR

Men and Women of the Old Testament and the Apocrypha

Notable in the bibliography of the Scriptures is the dominance of personal names for the titles, presenting the several books as written by or about human personalities. The Law or Pentateuch stands apart, but tradition assigns its compilation to Moses, and still the English Bible entitles the five volumes with 'The First Book of Moses, commonly called Genesis', etc. Of the subsequent Old Testament books all are named after persons except Judges and Kings (lists of named dictators and monarchs), Chronicles (parallel to Kings), Psalms (largely in their titles assigned to David and others). In the Apocrypha all are similarly entitled except *Bel and the Dragon*; the actual title of *Ecclesiasticus* is 'The Wisdom of Jesus son of Sirach', and the two books of *Maccabees* are named after a hero and his family. The books of the New Testament all have titles indicating the author, including in the case of certain Epistles the name of the personal addressee, except the Acts of the Apostles, a history of those personalities, and the Epistle to the Hebrews. That is, while by sacred tradition, the Book of God, yet according to the same tradition it was written for the most part by named authors, or with the names of the persons about whom or to whom the several books were written.

The present Chapter would give a more detailed exposition of the subject of the preceding one. The title specifies not only the Men but also the Women of the Bible. On this latter theme some preliminary remarks may be made.

Chapters 2 (vv. 4 ff.) and 3 of Genesis present a very

different story of the creation of the human species from that in ch. 1, according to which 'male and female created He them.' In this second account man was created first and without a consort; the woman was an afterthought of Deity: 'It is not good that man should be alone,' and she was made out of one of his ribs, to be his 'counterpart' (EVV 'a help meet for him'). The woman yields to the serpent's glib temptation and induces her husband to eat of the forbidden fruit of 'the tree of the knowledge of good and evil'. The immediate consequence was their discovery of sex. It is as though a primitive psychologist were sounding the problems concerned therewith, with all that is implied for good and evil in the history of the race. Yet elsewhere the Bible treats that relationship in a natural, healthy way, with none of the lewdness and perversion that stained the life of the Near East, of Greece, and later of Rome.

This picture of woman as man's necessary counterpart and then as his temptress, and so the stronger character of the two — over against her Adam is just a compliant gentleman — introduces us to the theme and depiction of woman throughout the Bible. The 'sex problem' has always confronted higher religion, even as it depraved the lower religions with which Israel was confronted, and which invaded its sacred confines, as recorded for instance in the story of king Josiah's reformation (2 Ki. 23). In Israel there arose ascetic groups like the Sons of the Prophets, and individuals like Elijah (the one perfect man in Jewish tradition, as the writer is informed), Elisha, John the Baptist. In the New Testament the celibate Paul (as such alone among the apostles, 1 Cor. 9:5) expresses at length a dissonant attitude towards marriage (cc. 6, 7), but he thrice states that certain of his dicta are his private opinions, not divine injunctions (7: 6, 12, 40). In cc. 11:2 ff.; 14: 33 ff. he discusses and restricts the dress and public speech of women in the church congregations. In such rulings he was following

the social manners of his day, just as in the Western Churches today the man takes his hat off, except in the case of high dignitaries, the woman keeps hers on, while, *vice versa*, in Jewry, the Eastern churches, Islam and the Society of Friends the man keeps his headpiece on, while the Muslim further takes his shoes off. Paul was not a logical but an impulsive thinker, he could see both sides of a question, or try to accommodate them; e.g. 1 Cor. 11: 7 ff., while giving precedence and authority to the man, he, as it were, revises his opinion (v. 12): 'For as the woman is out of the man, so is man also by the woman.' The suddenly arising liberty of women in the Church naturally developed libertinism in cases. There was 'the woman Jezebel; who calleth herself a prophetess' (Rev. 2:20). The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews faced the current active problem with full approval of marriage (13:4). The problem has still survived in the Church, not only in the Oriental and Roman Churches, but also in the ascetic groups of early German Protestantism, which migrated to Penn's Province of Pennsylvania.

There may exist today, especially in the feminine mind, accustomed within only a generation or two to the legal equality of the sexes, the tendency to look askance upon the woman of the ancient world, and in particular of the Orient down to our own day. But all that history reveals the high part that woman has taken as man's partner, and this by virtue of her own genius, in spite of the restraints of law and the ancient claims of the superiority of the male. The prospect affords innumerable examples of the part of woman in the world's drama, as also in Classical and subsequent tragedy and comedy. Notable examples are found in the ancient records of Babylonia, Assyria, and Egypt, even as in the Greek and Roman world, and we may pass down through all European history, viewing the like phenomena, in which women have been the power behind the throne, even upon the throne, as

for example the queens Elizabeth, Anne, Victoria, for the most illustrious periods of English history. In the modern Semitic world Islam has indeed legally degraded woman. Yet this appearance is largely superficial. Woman has in Islam played often her part as the centre and force within the home and social life, and also as a power in public life. For her position in that quarter reference may be made to the recent books by Lichtenstädter and Abbott, noted in the Bibliography. And one needs only to read the Arabian Nights to find tales in which women act as freely and stoutly as they do in much modern fiction, although without the latter's frequent nastiness. The Bibliography also gives titles of selected books which present the picture of woman in the Greek and Roman worlds.

Also in the Biblical history and story, which latter exhibits actual life better than the theories of law and religion, women are depicted with wonderful objective *finesse*, and as often with more character than the men their partners. It is mostly in the everyday circle of the home and the small social group that they stand out so distinctly, and yet there are many cases where woman is the subject of high life, and of tragedy and comedy. As earlier observed, four books of the Christian Bible are named after women,⁵ three of these private ladies, Ruth, Judith, Susanna, and one Esther (with a supplement in the Apocrypha), who became a Persian queen.

The human stage in the Bible is on the whole simple and natural, presenting rather the average humanity, without heroization as in the Classical legends, or the sanctification common in Church traditions. The extensive pedigrees given in Genesis are characteristic of the Oriental sense of family.

Abraham's wife Sarah was barren, she gives him her handmaid Hagar, who became pregnant, so that 'her mistress was despised in her eyes' (Gen. 16). Sarah was within her rights in demanding the woman's ejection; the latter fled into the desert where she had a divine vision of comfort, and then bore

her son Ishmael. Another version appears in ch. 21. The legitimate son by Sarah, Isaac, is born; at the weaning feast the mother sees the elder lad Ishmael 'mocking' boylike. Sarah demands the expulsion of Hagar and her son, which 'thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight on account of his son' — he loved the boy. By divine injunction, with the promise that of Ishmael a nation would be made, Abraham dismisses them both, giving them 'bread and a skin of water'. Hagar has, in repetition, a divine vision of comfort and promise. This effecting theme, in twofold tradition, is presented in the sacred records, despite the enduring enmity between the Chosen People and Ishmael's descendants. To return to the story of Isaac's birth. The advent of a legitimate son was announced by 'three men', whose chance visit to Abraham in his tent at Mamre at once, after Oriental hospitality, bestirs him and Sarah at his order to prepare an elaborate meal for them (ch. 18). They promise him a son by Sarah. She laughs — she and her husband are too old! Then Yahweh (who now replaces the three men) inquires, 'Why did Sarah laugh?' The woman lies and denies the accusation, but the Deity contradicts her. A simpler story of Sarah's laughing is given in 21:6f., when she laughed for joy. Actually the name Isaac means 'He (God) laughs'. Such divine merriment will be noted as ascribed to Yahweh in later instances (see Ch. VII), while the same activity is ascribed to a deity in a Ras Shamra text. Exceptionally the name of the child comes from the mother's prompting. These parallel stories may be fiction to explain the origin of the name Isaac, but they are told with full local color, true to life.

Further homely stories are told of the rather characterless Isaac and his dominating wife Rebekah. The initial one (ch. 24) details the desire of the old Abraham to obtain for his son Isaac a wife from his kinsfolk in Mesopotamia, how he sends his head servant to sue for a maiden of that family,

and how the faithful man prays at the well close by Nahor for a divine sign to guide his choice. Rebekah, a damsel 'fair to look upon', comes to the well to fill her pitcher, and hospitably gives him to drink and also draws for his camels. The action fulfills the omen he desired, and he knows that the maiden is the divinely appointed bride for his master's son. There follows the scene in her home with her two brothers, the legal accomplishment of the betrothal by proper gifts, and then the return home. In the neighboring countryside Isaac had gone out one evening, where the returning caravan finds him; when the bride meets him and learns who he is, she properly veils herself. The sequence is that 'he loved her.'

Twin sons are born to the couple, Esau and Jacob (25: 19 ff.). Even at birth there was strife between them as to precedence. Of them 'Isaac loved Esau, and Rebekah loved Jacob.' Two stories are told how Jacob ('the Heeler', hardly a complimentary interpretation), circumvented Esau in obtaining the birthright to the father (25:27 ff.; ch. 27); in the second Rebekah instructs her beloved son how to deceive the father and so obtain the birthright. The mother again interferes in the matter of marriage for her favorite; says she: 'I am weary of my life, because of the Hittite women,' such as were Esau's wives (26:34f.; 27:46). In consequence Isaac sent Jacob off to the mother country, to Paddan-Aram, to seek a wife from his mother's family (cc. 28ff.). There follows the story of Jacob's meeting and falling in love with Rachel at her father Laban's well, with the ensuing marriage complication as between Rachel and her elder sister Leah. Now 'Leah's eyes were weak' ['lacked lustre', as Skinner interprets, EVV 'tender'], but Rachel was beautiful and well-favored. And Jacob fell in love with Rachel.' The jealousy between the two wives, in which two concubines are further involved, along with the birth of their respective children, offers a story of Oriental harem life. Finally Jacob flees away with his family and possessions from

his domineering father-in-law. The latter pursues, being especially eager to recover his 'gods', the 'teraphim' (30: 30ff.), which Rachel had cannily made away with, these being prime token of the right of inheritance, as ancient law proves. Laban's search for them was in vain, Rachel having concealed them in a very feminine way.

An unpleasant story indeed is that of Judah's family life in ch. 39, with the artifice by which Tamar outdid her father-in-law; but she proved that she had the right against him. Similar is Reuben's gross misbehavior with his father's concubine Bilhah (35:22; 49:3f.). At least the alleged history throws no glamor upon the patriarchal family, and is natural in its flavor, however unhistorical.

The story of Joseph (cc. 37, 39 ff.) is a masterpiece. The envy of his brothers against this favorite of his father, 'because he was the son of his old age,' induces them to get rid of him by selling him to roving Ishmaelites, who bring him down to Egypt. There is the generous but fruitless attempt of the eldest brother Reuben to save him out of the brothers' hands. His father's grief is depicted: 'He refused to be comforted, and he said, For I will go to Sheol to my son mourning.' Joseph is sold to the Egyptian magnate Potiphar, and becomes overseer of his household (ch. 39). A woman again appears in the person of Potiphar's wife, who 'cast her eyes upon Joseph,' for he 'was comely and well-favored' (vv. 6ff.). He refuses her solicitations, and she turns the tables upon him by the accusation to her lord that he attempted to ravish her, upon which the husband, evidently not believing his lady, merely has him committed to the royal prison. From youth he had been an interpreter and dreamer of dreams (37:5ff.), and he so distinguishes himself in the prison (ch. 40). News of his *clairvoyance* is brought to the Pharaoh, who had his own dreams, so that 'his spirit was troubled' (ch. 41). Joseph is fetched from prison, and interprets the dreams as foreboding a

seven-year famine. He gives such practical advice for forestalling the plagues and appointing a good administrator for the lean years, that the Pharaoh comments: 'Can we find such a one as this, in whom the spirit of God is?' and 'puts him in charge over all the land of Egypt.' Such sudden rises to viziership were not unknown in the ancient Orient. Joseph's kin again reappear (cc. 42ff.). Jacob sends down to Egypt, to buy corn in the world-wide famine, all his sons but Benjamin, the youngest, fellow son with Joseph by the same mother. Upon their audience with him, Joseph desires only to see that beloved brother, and cares not about the others. He dismisses them with the desired grain, but detains brother Simeon as a hostage, knowing full well that with the prolonged famine they must return again to Egypt with similar purpose, and he requires of them that they then bring Benjamin along. The sons return home, announce the dire tidings to the old father. He refuses: 'Me have ye bereaved of my children. Joseph is not, and Simeon is not; all these things are against me . . . My son shall not go down with you . . . If harm befall him by the way in which ye go, then will ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheol' (42:38, cf. 43:14). The continued famine compels them to return to Egypt with Benjamin in the company, Judah going security for him (ch. 43). When they appear in Joseph's presence, he inquires most courteously after their welfare, asks after their father, 'Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake?', then glancing at Benjamin he inquires, 'Is this your youngest brother of whom ye spake? God be gracious to thee, my son!' He leaves them, 'for his heart yearned after his brother . . . And he entered into his chamber, and wept there.' Then after washing his face, he rejoins them, and feasts them. On the morrow their caravan departs. By a stragem to recover Benjamin alone for good, he has his steward place his own particular silver cup in Benjamin's sack, then has the caravan overhauled, their luggage examined, and the cup

is found in Benjamin's sack. Knowing the expected penalty, the detention of the exposed thief, as so discovered, they all return to Joseph's house. Judah makes an affecting speech, prospecting the father's grief, and offering himself as bondsman in place of Benjamin. Joseph had earlier felt no reck about the elder brothers, who had once kidnaped and sold him off; he cared only for the dear and innocent youngest brother. But now he is overcome, all his feelings as son and fellow-brother surge up (45:1ff.). He sends out his retinue, he weeps aloud, and says to his brothers: 'I am Joseph. Doth my father yet live?' The brothers were troubled indeed. But Joseph affectionately makes up to them. The whole past history was of God's providence, and not their act. His words are classical in all thought upon the divine Providence and its operation in history. 'God sent me before you to preserve you a remnant in the earth . . . So now it was not you that sent me hither but God.' This is an early anticipation of the Remnant of Israel, which survived for immortal purpose. These stories, sagas, contain expressions of religious thought as lofty as those of the Prophets. The story has the advantage over the more theological compositions in 'making plain' the lesson to the simple folk, that 'he may run that readeth it' (Hab. 2: 2). Joseph bids his brothers to return home, and then to return with their father and families and flocks and herds, to dwell in the fat land of Goshen, until the famine is past. And then 'he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and Benjamin wept upon his neck. And he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them. Then they all had a happy talk together. The story is one of genuine humanity. Above it all is the brooding presence of the divine, even as Joseph had discovered it in his own experience.

Moses is the outstanding figure in the Hebrew Scriptures, even as Jesus is in the Christian supplement. The story of his infancy (Ex. 2) is indeed a parallel to the far earlier legend of the Babylonian Sargon, king of Agade (R. W. Rogers,

Cuneiform Parallels to the O. T., pp. 135 ff.), according to which in the hero's own language: 'My lowly mother conceived me, in secret she brought me forth. She set me in a basket of rushes, with bitumen she closed my door. She cast me into the river, which rose not over me. The river bore me up, unto Akki, the irrigator it carried me,' who reared him as his son, and the boy became a gardener, whom Ishtar loved. There is also the Roman story of the suckling of Romulus and Remus by a she-wolf. But the Biblical story is told with lifelike human details. To avoid her child's destruction by the Pharaoh's drastic orders, his mother hides him in an ark of papyrus by the river's brink, and has his sister keep watch. The daughter of the Pharaoh comes down to bathe, discovers the babe weeping, has compassion upon him, and recognizes him to be 'one of the Hebrews' children'. The sister intervenes, and suggests calling 'a nurse of the Hebrew women', and the princess bids her so to do. It is the mother herself whom she introduces. And when 'the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son.' When he grew to manhood, he asserted his Hebrew blood by killing an Egyptian who was assaulting a fellow Hebrew, and to avoid discovery fled to the land of Midian in northern Arabia. In the sequel he plays the man again in driving off some rude shepherds who were keeping seven shepherdesses, daughters of Jethro, priest of Midian, from approaching a well. Indeed the rare water wells appear to have been often the scenes of first encounters of lovers, even as the woodland waters have been in our northern climes. Romance-wise he marries one of these ladies, Zipporah, and has a son by her, Gershom. This relationship is noted in a statement about the Kenites (Jud. 1:16)). Later Moses married another Arabian woman, a Cushite (Num. 12:1ff.). Such traditions of marriage outside of the folk must be old. It is noticeable that the family line of Moses plays no part in the subsequent history; his son Gershom/Gershon is otherwise

listed merely as a Levite. On the other hand Moses' brother is immortalized as the father of the later priestly caste. Inspired lawgiving like prophecy never went by descent, as did priesthood in antiquity.

Subsequently in a scene most true to Arabian life (Ex. 18) there is recorded the gracious visit of Jethro to Moses upon the latter's return to his old haunts, and his bringing to him Zipporah and her two sons. He is represented as offering sacrifice to God, in which Moses and Aaron and the elders participated. And subsequently the experienced sheikh gives his son-in-law practical advice for good judicial procedure in judging his so great people. Moses accepts and immediately puts in practice his counsel. This is a realistic anecdote concerning the otherwise divinely inspired Lawgiver.

Chapters 3 and 4 introduce us to Moses' experiences in the desert, in their extent unique in the history of Israel's notables. Elijah had his flight to the same desert (1 Ki. 19), John the Baptist lived his life in the desert (Lk. 3:1ff.), and Jesus had His forty days of temptaion in the wilderness (Mt. 4:1ff. and parallels). Otherwise the Biblical lives are lived in the midst of human society. Moses is vouchsafed the revelation of 'I AM THAT I AM', but fights shy of the divine commission: 'I am not a man of words . . . am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue' (Ex. 4:10ff.). For his reluctance the divine anger was kindled against him, and Aaron was appointed his spokesman. Indeed 'the man Moses was very meek, above all men on the face of the earth,' as appears in the story of Aaron's and Miriam's contention with him for marrying the Cushite woman, for which quarrel they were duly punished (Num. 12). To many of the great men of history this compliment may not be paid. But Moses is not depicted as faultless. In a certain scene (Num. 22:2ff., Dt. 32:48ff.) in a fit of anger he disobeys the explicit command of Yahweh for bringing water out of the

rock, and as penalty he was doomed along with Aaron not to enter the Promised Land.

An anecdote about the quarrelsome Miriam has been cited. But in an earlier scene (Ex. 15), she, now entitled 'the prophetess', and fellow-women took their part 'with timbrels and dances' in the exultation over the crossing of the Red Sea, and in her mouth is put the chorus to Moses' Song:

'Sing ye to Yahweh, for He hath triumphed gloriously;

The horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea.'

Such musical exultation on the part of women appears in the case of Deborah (Jud. 5), and Jephthah's pathetic daughter (11:34ff.), and the part of maidens in the later temple worship is presented in Pss. 68:25; 87: 7; cf. 148 :12.

The hero of the book of Joshua stands forth unblamed (11:15), but he is not very personally depicted. On the other hand Judges is a narrative of mostly very human heroes, like the princes and knights of the Middle Ages. Only some of these lively sagas may be noticed here. Chapters 4, 5 present the story of Deborah, 'a prophetess . . . who judged Israel at that time.' By divine prompting she commissions Barak to fight Sisera, the commander of the army of the oppressor, Jabin, 'king of Canaan'. Sisera is defeated, he flees for refuge to the tent of the allied Heber the Kenite. The latter's wife welcomes him in true Oriental fashion, giving him milk, when he asks for water, and covering him with a rug that he may sleep. Then she takes a tentpin, smites it through his temples, and proudly exhibits her victim to Barak. There follows the Song of Deborah, the oldest extant ode in Hebrew literature, and its finest secular composition. She, as 'a mother in Israel', takes as the climax of her song, and for her blessing, Jael's redoubtable deed. There follows her satire on Sisera's mother:

'Through the window she peered and looked sharp (?)

Did Sisera's mother, through the lattice:

Why is his chariot so long in coming,

Why tarry the treads of his chariots?

The wisest of her ladies answer her,

Yea, she makes answer to herself:

Do they not find, divide the spoil,

A wench or two for each man?

Then she lists in true feminine fashion the booty of rich garments accumulated by Sisera, in which those ladies might have shared. This 'peering through the window' is told of women in later stories.

The goodly Gideon-Jerubbaal had by a concubine of his numerous harem an ambitious, reckless son Abimelech, who slew all but one of his many brothers, and had himself made king in Shechem (8:29ff., ch. 9). The fugitive son Jotham, from 'the top of Mount Gerizim', taunts the usurper with a long parabolic utterance from nature, how the bramble came to be king of all the trees, with the sad result that the bramble caught on fire, and they were all burned up, including the cedars of Lebanon — the first Biblical parable of length. Finally, the deserved catastrophe befalls Abimelech; while he was besieging a city a woman 'cast a millstone upon his head, and brake his skull,' — a shameful death for a warrior.

The story of the judge Jephthah, the Gileadite, concludes with pathetic tragedy (ch. 11). He had vowed to Yahweh that in case of his success against the Ammonites he would immolate the first one of his household to meet him upon his return home. It was his only child, a daughter, who came out to greet him 'with timbrels and dances'. He laments his rash vow. She requires that he fulfill it, with only the proviso that she may go to the mountains with her companions, and 'bewail her virginity' (with thought of the family, not of herself). Thereafter the tragic end of this Hebrew Iphigenia was celebrated annually with mourning rites by the daughters of Israel.

Samson (cc. 13-16) is the doughty strong man of the Bible. Consecrated by his parents before birth as a Nazirite to God,

who might drink no wine nor strong liquor, eat no unclean thing, and was to go unshorn (13:7; 16:17), he was no model of morals. Two women are fellow actors in his story. He marries a Philistine woman of Timnath, who betrays him by disclosing to her people the secret of a riddle he had propounded to them. He later takes his revenge on the Philistines, but loses his wife. Later he loves a harlot of Gaza, Delilah, who attempts to discover the secret of his strength, that she may betray him to her people. He mocks her thrice with false explanations, finally exposes the secret of his unshorn hair, which she thereupon cuts off. Then with her cry, 'the Philistines are upon thee,' his enemies seize him, blind him, put him in prison. He has his revenge when his hair grows again. Brought into a festal assembly that he might 'make sport for us,' he pulls down the supporting pillars of the temple roof, thus killing the whole concourse including himself. The story is one of both comedy and tragedy. The Puritan John Milton does not do full justice to it in his *Samson Agonistes*; indeed he euphemizes by making the harlot the hero's wife.

The final story (cc. 19-21) is that of the almost complete annihilation of Benjamin by the other Children of Israel. It is introduced with the account of a Levite, who had a concubine, who 'played the harlot against him,' and returned to her father's home. The man goes after her with abiding affection, is received by the father with pressing hospitality. On his way home with her, at Gibeah he is induced by a most hospitable stranger to spend the night in his home. Certain lewd fellows besiege the house, and despite the host's noble protestations, seize the woman and ravish her. The Levite by a barbarous means excites the revenge of the other tribes of Israel against the small tribe, which was brought to almost total destruction. Some six hundred men survived, of the women only four hundred virgins, who were kept at Shiloh. There follows a complicated story, telling in one form how the Benjamite survivors

were graciously allowed to seize for themselves wives of the maidens at Shiloh, when they were 'dancing in the dances' at a certain yearly 'feast of Yahweh's', so preserving the tribe from extinction.

The book of Ruth is primarily a book of women. It tells affectingly the story of the widow Naomi and her two widowed Moabite daughters-in-law, how she arose to depart from Moab, where her later life had been spent, to return to her home town Bethlehem. The young women would follow her, but she bids them stay behind, and seek new husbands in their native country. The one, Orpah, yields to her protestation, and 'kisses her' goodbye; but 'Ruth clave to her.' The women of Bethlehem recognize the elder lady with surprise: 'Is this Naomi?' No, she replies: 'Not Naomi ['pleasant one'], but Mara ['bitter'], for the Almighty hath afflicted me.' The following story must be read at length for appreciation of its delicacy and the point of law involved: how, following Naomi's advice, Ruth goes to glean with the maidens in the fields of kinsman Boaz, how she introduces herself to him by lying down at his feet on the threshing floor where he had gone to sleep at the end of the long day, 'having eaten and drunk, and his heart merry,' then with what gentlemanliness he treats her, and how by redeeming a parcel of land that belonged to Naomi he established a claim to the hand of Ruth, with whom he had fallen in love. He announces the marriage before the citizens as witnesses to the estate involved. They lived happily ever afterwards, and had a son, who became the grandfather of David. The delicacy of this story varies from the grossness of another ancestress of David's, Tamar, who 'played the harlot' in order to establish her legal rights with her father-in-law Judah (Gen. 38; for the genealogy see Ruth, 4:18ff.). David indeed had a mixed ancestry both ethnically and ethically.

The book of Samuel (one book in the Hebrew) opens with story of 'the boy Samuel' (I, cc. 1-3). A certain Elkanah had

two wives, one Peninah, who had children, the other Hannah, who was childless; but the husband 'loved Hannah.' The jealousy of women appears, the latter's rival 'provoked her sore,' so 'that she would not eat,' although her husband comforts her, 'Am I not better to thee than ten sons?' She is then pictured as praying for a son by Yahweh's temple at Shiloh. The priest Eli observes her mumbling lips, without utterance, and charges her with drunkenness. She denies: 'No, my lord! I am a woman of sorrowful spirit . . . I have poured out my heart before Yahweh.' Eli becomes compassionate: 'The God of Israel grant thy petition!' Gladdened with this good omen, she returns home, and in due course bears the son Samuel, whom she dedicates for his life to Yahweh, bringing him to Shiloh, when he was weaned. Then is given the poetic 'prayer' of Hannah, 'My heart exulteth in Yahweh.' And 'the boy was ministering to Yahweh before Eli the priest.' There follows (ch. 3) the scene in the temple, where Eli and his attendant were passing the night, with the divine call, 'Samuel!', to which the boy responds by 'running to Eli', supposing that he had called him, but Eli denies it. Twice this scene is repeated, and then 'Eli perceived that Yahweh had called the boy,' and he bids him respond to the Voice, if it speaks again, 'Speak, Yahweh, for Thy servant heareth'. Upon the next utterance of the Voice, to which the boy makes the directed response, there comes the oracle, one of doom for Eli's house, because of the sin of his two sons, who were priests (cf. ch. 2). Eli insists on the boy telling him the divine word, and he accepts it as the will of God. The tragic end of Eli and his two sons is told in ch. 4; the latter are slain in a great defeat inflicted upon Israel by the Philistines, and then there is the scene of the death of the old man, who, upon receiving the fateful news, 'fell from off his seat backward by the side of the gate; and his neck brake and he died; for he was an old man and heavy.' And his daughter-in-law, bearing a now fatherless child,

refused to be comforted by the attendant women, and named the babe Ichabod, which is etymologized with 'There is no glory.'

Samuel, succeeding Eli as priest and becoming judge of Israel (ch. 7), also seer and man of God (see the story in 9: 5ff.), did not learn the sad lesson of his predecessor's family history. He desired a family succession, and made his two sons judges at Beer-sheba; but 'they turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted justice' (8:1ff.). As so often in general history great men leave no worthy sons! The people demand a king, and despite his democratic protestations, he obeys the divine voice 'to make them a king' (cc. 8-10, cf. ch. 12). There follows the story of the selection and coronation of Saul, a doughty warrior, but a fitful personality: 'Yahweh was sorry that He had made Saul king over Israel' (15:35); the divine experiment had failed. Another hero had appeared on the stage.

The ensuing story of David, one of knightly deeds and intimate personal relations, is the finest presentation of a personality in the Hebrew Bible. It is also the longest biography in the whole Bible, being about one and a half times as long as the longest Gospel, that of Matthew. Uniquely his personal appearance is described in the account of Samuel's annointment of him: 'He was ruddy, a youth [so with slight correction] fair of eyes, and goodly to look upon' (16:12); almost the same description is given for the Philistine Goliath's scorn of him (17:42). (A contrasted description for a woman's eyes is given in Gen. 29:17). His many-sided character is summed up in a statement by one of Saul's 'youths' (i.e. pages, or knights), describing him as one 'who knows how to play (the harp), and a valiant hero, and a man of war, and clever in speech, and a comely person' (16:18). A parallel is found in Anglo-Saxon king Arthur, who with his other accomplishments was also a skilled minstrel. But despite these initial

encomiums the Bible tells the true and often tragic story of this shepherd boy, the sweet player on the harp, and poet, reputed composer of Psalms, the founder of a dynasty, ideally extended with Messianic hopes.

His personality is depicted in many private anecdotes. Saul's son and heir became his dearest friend. 'Jonathan's soul was knit with David's soul and he loved him as his own soul' (18:1ff., repeated in 20:17). Upon David's subsequent flight Jonathan found occasion for a meeting with him in the open country (ch. 20). They make a covenant together, in which David's superior right is acknowledged, and the prince attempts to make peace between his father and his friend. The result is a quarrel between father and son (vv. 30ff.), Saul casts a spear at him, and Jonathan rises from the table and goes off 'in fierce anger'. The two friends have a subsequent intimate meeting, their last encounter. David's dirge over Saul and Jonathan is one of the world's great poems (II, 1:19ff.) with its generosity towards his past royal enemy, and for its anguish in the loss of his friend:

'I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan;

Very pleasant hath thy love been to me.

Thy love to me was wonderful,

Passing the love of women.'

Another contact with the court existed in his relations with the two princesses, Merab and Michal (18:17ff.). The king promised him the hand of the elder daughter, but breaks his word by giving her to another man. However 'Michal loved David.' The king 'was pleased,' but with deceit, for he arranges 'a snare' against him with the demand that he bring as a dowry a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, which demand he fulfills. And so 'Saul gave him Micah his daughter to wife . . . And Micah loved him.' But subsequently the king gives her to another man (25:44). David later recovered her, for she appears in a dramatic scene, scoffing at her husband,

proud princess as she was (II, 6:20ff.).

So far for David's relations with the royal family. Saul was wont to be affected with frenzies, his courtiers tell him that it is 'an evil spirit from God that troubleth thee' (16: 14 ff.). They suggest securing a skillful harpist to drive away the malady, and, as noted above, upon the suggestion of one of the court, David is obtained and 'when the spirit from God (cf. I Ki. 22:19ff.), was upon Saul, David took the harp, and played with his hand; so Saul was refreshed, and became well, and the evil spirit departed from him.' But this so intimate relation is broken. After his return from a great slaughter of the Philistines (18: 6ff.) in the triumph 'the women came out of all the cities of Judah, singing and dancing, with timrels, triangles, and instruments of music. And the women sang one to another as they played, and said: 'Saul hath slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands.' The king became wroth indeed, 'he eyed David from that day on.' On the morrow 'an evil spirit from God came mightily upon Saul, and he raved' (with RV marg.; AV 'prophesied'; the form of the Hebrew verb is used of religious mania, cf. 19:23ff.). David, as was his wont, played with his hand to soothe him, but Saul twice cast his spear at him, which blows David evaded. Saul removed him from his presence, but made him commander of an army. 'He stood in awe of him,' because of his wise behavior.

A parallel, but much more detailed story (doubtless the original of the previous brief anecdote) appears in 19: 8ff. After a preface with similar circumstances, David is represented as fleeing to his home. His canny wife Michal counsels him that he is not safe at home, and helps him to escape by 'dropping him down through the window.' Then she takes the household teraphim, an idol figure, a family relic of ancient paganism (cf. another woman's handling of teraphim, Gen. 31: 17ff.), lays it in David's bed, dressing the head up to look

like a sick man. Saul's envoys for his arrest are rebuffed by her showing him sick in bed. Saul sends them again, with orders to bring him, bed and all. The interval gives David opportunity to make good his escape.

This incident completes the rupture between Saul and David, the latter must flee and live the life of a freebooter. There is nothing to show that, while declared a rebel, he acted hostilely to the king, although his promised high destiny (16: 1ff.) must have kept his eyes fixed on the so definite future. Kingship was a novelty in Israel; its laws of succession were not yet formulated. We may note David's choice of a younger son, Solomon, as his heir. Ch. 24 tells the story how David generously spared the life of the king in the cave at En-gedi, with a subsequent reconciliation between the two, but they parted never to meet again. The dirge in II, 1 is dedicated to Saul as well as to Jonathan.

A lively tale, with a woman again as heroine, is that of Abigail, wife of Nabal, a certain proprietor in Carmel, 'a man churlish and evil in his doings' (ch. 25). David, now a roving free lance, sends Nabal a polite message, asking, after good Arabian style, for 'a gift', which would serve as insurance against raids. Grimly refused by Nabal, David arms his followers for an assault upon his possessions, but his purpose is met and frustrated by his wife Abigail. She was 'a woman of good understanding, and of beautiful countenance', and her very feminine argument, as doubtless also her beauty, prevail upon David. She returns home, and finds her husband, 'holding a feast like a king's feast'. On the morrow, when 'the wine was gone out of Nabal,' she tells him the story; terrified, he was afflicted with a stroke of the heart, and after ten days died. The expected climax occurs, David obtains Abigail as his wife. In his suit for her he recognizes the divine hand in the fate that has befallen her husband, and that had kept him himself from evil-doing — again a personal view of Providence,

with which may be compared Joseph's excuse for his brothers.

The Second Book of Samuel opens with the events after Saul's death. David became king in Hebron. Saul's heir Ish-bosheth (Chron., Esh-baal) survived as *fainéant* monarch until upon his assassination (ch. 4) 'all the tribes of Israel' assembled to make David king (5:1ff.). There follows a history of cruel *razzias* and murders, yet with redeeming figures. David proved himself the knightly gentleman by condemning his arrogant commander Joab's treacherous murder of Abner, who had been generalissimo on the other side, and then turned to David. The latter composed a dirge over him, lines of which are preserved (ch. 3). Also he slew Ish-bosheth's assassins (ch. 4). He treated generously one of Jonathan's sons, Mephibosheth, who had been lamed by an accident in a flight of his family, by taking him into his court (4: 4; ch. 9); to be sure, as physically defective, he was not eligible for the throne.

There follows the history of David's capture of the Jebusite enclave, Jerusalem, and of his fetching thither the ark of Yahweh — a signal event for all subsequent history (ch. 6). The lady Michal, with whom he had formerly enjoyed such strong affection, intrudes a disturbing scene in the high celebration of the entrance of the ark into the Holy City (vv. 20ff.). She 'looked out of the window [for such position for a lady cf. Jud. 51:28, 2 Ki. 9:30], and saw David leaping and dancing before Yahweh; and she despised him in her heart.' When he returned home, 'to bless his family,' she came out to taunt him: 'How glorious was the king of Israel today, who uncovered himself today in the eyes of his servants' handmaids!' David retorts in kind: 'Of the handmaids of whom thou hast spoken, of them I shall be had in honor.' The pompous lady had her fate; she never had a child.

David's matrimonial adventures (for his harem see 3:2ff.; 5:13ff.) are terminated with the ugliest history in the Bible, namely his seizure of Uriah the Hittite's wife, Bath-sheba (ch.

11). His first sight of her is vividly told: how at eventide from the roof of his palace 'he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.' He takes her privately; she becomes pregnant. David recalls the husband from the field of war, would induce him to go home and consort with his wife, and so cover up his own misdeed. The gallant soldier replies that as on active duty he may not go home, and he remains in the palace, where 'the king made him drunk,' even then without success to his crafty plan. David, not to be thwarted in his vile purpose, writes a letter to generalissimo Joab, ordering him to place Uriah in the foremost of the battle, and Joab, pliant in all cruelties, obeys, and in consequence Uriah is slain. David sends a most polite letter to Joab, to disguise the foul plot. Bath-sheba made due mourning for her husband, and then 'David took her home to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son.' The story has its sorrowful epilogue (ch. 12). Nathan the prophet, who had been David's champion in sacred things (ch. 7), presents to him a legal case, which was a parable (cf. Jotham's parable, Jud. 9:7ff.), of the rich man with many flocks, and the poor man with only one ewe lamb, who 'was unto him as a daughter,' and how, when a traveller came to the rich man's house, the latter took the poor man's lamb, and served it up to the visitor. David is indignant, and as king pronounces judgment on the rich man. There comes the prophet's retort: 'Thou art the man!' with inspired announcement of the tragedies that were to befall his own family: 'The sword shall never depart from thy house . . . I will raise up evil against thee.' David indeed repents, but the prophet foretells the death of the child born of adultery. The baby falls sick, and there follows the pathetic story of the fond father's agony for seven days. When the child dies, his servants cannot bring themselves to tell him the news; he learns of it through 'their whispering together'. He breaks out: 'It is Yahweh's will. I shall go to him, but he will not return to me.'

However the family life was renewed; he 'comforted Bathsheba,' who bore him a son, Solomon. This dominant lady appears again later in the history (1 Ki. 1).

There follows (cc. 13-18) as tragical sequel the history of David's son Absalom, with almost the rupture of the kingdom. He took after his father as a handsome man (14:25f.): 'In all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom; from the sole of his feet to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him,' and with a glorious growth of hair. The history introduces Tamar, a 'fair sister' of Absalom's, with whom his brother (doubtless by another mother) Amnon had fallen in love. Following the advice of a wily first-cousin, Amnon feigns illness, and at his request the father David sends Tamar to his chamber, to prepare, as a nurse, proper food for him. He ravishes her. 'Then he hated her with a hatred greater than the love wherewith he had loved her,' and had her locked out of his house. She goes forth with ashes on her head and her princely garments rent, crying aloud as she went. Absalom precognizant of the affair, inquires of her trouble, but takes no immediate action. After two years of delay he finds convenient opportunity to slay Amnon. Forthwith he flees to Geshur. Yet still with a father's affection David longed to go after him (v. 39). There follows (ch. 14) the ruse by which the loyal Joab brings him back to his father, through the homely parable of 'a wise woman of Tekoa' (cf. another story of 'a wise woman', 20:16ff.). He returns to Jerusalem, but 'he may not see the king's face.' By a violent attempt on Joab's property he compels the latter to sue for the king's grace. He returned to his father's presence with due obeisance, 'and the king kissed Absalom.'

But the characteristically renegade Absalom started a revolt in the heart of Judah, with Judaeen sympathy; he had himself made 'king in Hebron' (cc. 15ff.). The king and his household had to flee from Jerusalem. Many stirring incidents are told of the flight and exile, of the persons concerned in

David's party and those whom he met on the way. Absalom seized Jerusalem (16:15ff.). There, following the advice of a friend, Ahithophel, who was esteemed as an oracular person (16:20ff.), he consorted 'in the sight of all Israel' (of course by pantomime), in a tent on the roof of the palace, with ten of his father's concubines, who had been left behind (cf. 15.16, and for their later status 20:3). This was to constitute public testimony to his right to the predecessor's throne.

Finally in a decisive battle (ch. 18) the rebel son's army was defeated. Absalom, when riding off, was caught by his glorious hairlocks in the boughs of an oak, where he was found by the loyal Joab, and then slain by him and his attendants. When, what should have been the joyful news of victory, is brought to David, who however was most anxious concerning the possible fate of his son (vv. 31 ff.), 'he was greatly moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept. And as he went, thus he said: O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would that I had died for thee, my son Absalom!' The father's persistent love for his children is repeated, even for his renegade and brutal son. This most inopportune public lamentation of the father is caustically reproved by the blunt Joab; the king had to compose himself; and he took his seat at the place of judgment at the gate (19:1ff.).

A gloomily sequel ensues (ch. 21). Following a divine oracle, to avert a long plague, David granted blood-revenge to the Gibeonites for a violence perpetrated upon them by Saul, and had seven of Saul's grandsons put to death by hanging. Five of them were children, by her second husband, of his one-time wife Merab [so 'Micah' is to be corrected, with I, 18:19 — was there personal spite concerned here?]; the others, two sons of Rizpah, another of Saul's daughters. The latter's pathetic concern for her dead children is depicted. As a conclusion David paid proper respect for his predecessor in providing final entombment for the recovered bones of Saul and Jonathan.

I Kings opens with the sequel of the bloody course of tragedy in which David's family and court were involved (cc. 1, 2). The old king is presented as in his dotage, nursed by the fair Shunamite, Abishag — not a concubine. He had made no public provision for the succession, which did not necessarily go by primogeniture. His eldest surviving son Adonijah (for the royal princes see 2 Sam. 3:2ff.; 5:13ff.), 'a very handsome man', took occasion to 'exalt himself' as king, unbeknownst to his father. He is supported as legitimate heir by the loyal Joab and Abiathar, his father's faithful priest. The prophet Nathan, who had earlier denounced David's sin with Bath-sheba, is now most friendly to her, and concocts a clever arrangement with the queen-mother, whereby first she enters the royal chamber, informs David of Adonijah's arrogant action, and presses the claim of her son Solomon, whom she alleges, the father had by oath appointed his heir. She retires (she may not remain in the chamber with a male visitor), and Nathan enters, repeating her story, and expressing his surprise that the king had not announced his purpose as to the succession. Nathan withdraws, Bath-sheba enters again, and the king promises to her the immediate accession of Solomon as king. Royal orders are issued to the priest Sadok, the prophet Nathan and the commander along with a great fanfare of pipes. Adonijah takes refuge at the altar, but is reprieved by his father, on condition that he behave himself.

This son's story is continued, with initial romance and final tragedy. He has fallen in love with Abishag, and asks the very important queen-mother to be go-between in his suit for her hand, a duty that she generously accepts. Solomon indignantly refuses, and has the unfortunate suitor slain by Benaiah. His friend, the obstinate Joab (cf. 1:7), hears of his fate, flees to sanctuary at the altar of the Tent, and by royal order is slain there by Benaiah — the king alleging this fate as merited punishment for Joab's earlier contumacious murders. And so 'the

kingdom was established in the hands of Solomon.'

Solomon became the *grand monarque* of Israel, glorified ever afterward as the builder of the temple, as the Wise Man *par excellence* (for the early tradition cf. 4:29ff.), with Biblical and Apocryphal books ascribed to his genius, one of them, his Song, picturing him as devoted lover of a fair maiden — personal romance in contrast to the thousand women of his harem (11:1ff.). Only one detail of his royal virtue is reported of him, namely in the prayer put in his mouth upon the great ritual celebration at Gibeon (3:4ff.), a petition which for the sake of his memory we might wish that he realized — how he prayed for 'an attentive heart to judge Thy people, to discern between good and evil,' the prime duty of ancient monarchy. There ensues the pathetic story of his decision between two harlots in their claims to a child. But as results proved, the royal administration was not just but tyrannical. And when he 'was old, his wives turned away his heart after other gods' (11:4), and according to the critical historian's moral this relapse brought on rebellions within his realm, for 'Yahweh was angry with Solomon' (v. 9), the crucial one that of Jeroboam, which resulted, upon the son Rehoboam's accession, in the permanent rupture of the North and South.

For the subsequent history of the divided realms the historian rejoices in the exact data of royal successions, the wars and contacts with foreign nations and empires, which enable us to envisage Israel in world-history. The North underwent the civil wars and changes of dynasty, true to antiquity and repeated through history ever since. Judah had the advantage of aloofness from the larger world and of a permanent dynasty; but its history is rather barren in the depiction of humanity. For the North we have the lively stories of the Prophets and Sons of the Prophets (i.e. guilds), in particular of Elijah and Elisha. These contain many anecdotes of local, social flavor. For example, there is the story of the 'great lady' of Shunem

(II, 4:8ff.), who prevailed upon Elisha, whom she recognized as 'a holy man', to be her constant guest, and provided for him 'a little chamber attached to the wall (to which he had his separate approach), with a bed and a table and a seat and a lamp.' She was childless. Elisha promised her the birth of a son, which ensued in due course. When the boy was fairly grown, 'he went out to his father to the reapers.' He suffers sunstroke and cries out to his father, 'My head, my head!' He dies. Despite her husband's protest, not understanding why she was going after 'the man of God', she insists on having an ass saddled, and rides off to find Elisha. She brings him home, and he by a kind of primitive thermotherapy, according to the story, brings him back to life. Again a story of woman's persistence! It is continued in 8:1ff., according to which the same woman, now evidently a widow, after seven years' absence abroad, through the discovery of her relations with Elisha was able to recover her estates, which had been sequestered by others of kin. With this story of a woman's claim upon the law may be compared that of Naomi and Ruth.

The influence of royal ladies reappears, notably in the case of Ahab's queen, Jezebel. She had obtained the neighbor Naboth's inherited vineyard, by false accusation, so taking the lead over her easy-going husband, for which action her doom was pronounced by Elijah (ch. 21). This came about with Jehu's successful revolt (II, 9:30ff.). 'When Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it, and she painted her eyes, and dressed her head, and looked out at the window. And as Jehu entered at the gate, she said: 'Is it peace, thou Zimri- [addressing him after the name of an earlier royal assassin, I, 16:8ff.], thy master's murderer?' (For the royal lady looking out of the window cf. Jud. 5:28ff., 2 Sam. 6:16ff.) He has her thrown down, treads her under the horse hoofs and the dogs eat her. A like woman of the same family, Athalia, daughter of Ahab (and of Jezebel? — 8:26) came to the throne in Judah

by marriage with king Jehoram. Upon the death of their son Ahaziah, the successor, she undertook the destruction of 'all the seed royal' (ch. 11). Only one, Joash, was saved by the wits of his aunt Jehosheba, who hid him away with his nurse in a bedchamber, while 'Athaliah ruled over the land.' Seven years later the priest Jehoiada skillfully arranged an uprising of the people and the military, introduced the young prince to the people, and had him crowned in the temple. Athaliah hears the news, rushes to the spot, and cries out, 'Treason! Treason!' A plucky woman to the last, she is removed from the sacred precincts by the priest's orders, and put to death outside. A reformation of religion ensued, and 'all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was quiet.'

For the Writing Prophets of this age we have the pathetic story of Hosea with his asserted experience of 'a wife of whoredom and children of whoredom' with a parallel in ch. 3. The three children are given symbolic names foreboding the coming destruction of the Northern Kingdom. Similarly Isaiah is instructed to give his future son a symbolic name of like fateful import (Is. 8:1ff.). In 2 Ki. 22:14ff. there is the notable story how king Josiah sends his commissioners, his priest, his scribe, and two others, to obtain a divine oracle from a 'Huldah, the prophetess', whose home is exactly placed — a proof of historicity. It is strange that a woman was so chosen, but they have appeared elsewhere as endowed with prophetic gifts.

Of the Wisdom Books that of Proverbs may in particular be noted for a view of ancient society, addressed, as it is so often, to 'My son', with its wise maxims for life, religion and manners. The opposite poles of womanhood appears in extended and lifelike presentation, as in that of 'the strange woman' with her wiles and impudence, so that the man 'like a bird hasteneth to the snare', the narrator seeing the whole scene 'through his window and lattice'. On the other hand there is the eulogy of 'the virtuous woman' (Evv 'worthy

woman'), whose 'price is above rubies' (31:10ff.).

The Old Testament history for the immediate Pre-Exilic and Exilic periods offers comparatively little of personal and social interest except for the book of Jeremiah, the latter part of which is largely biographical (cc. 27ff.). The book presents many a scene of heart-searching experience. For the early Post-Exilic age, of the two histories, Ezra and Nehemiah, the latter is mostly autobiographical. Literary development in such disturbed times might not be expected.

Later there was the free revival of the romantic, professedly historical story; this development was the expression of the cosmopolitan experiences of the widely scattered Diaspora. The romance of queen Esther, with the stage set in the Persian capital Shushan, stands out preeminently in the early history of the novel. Notable it is that the heroine and her adoptive father and true friend Mordecai have Babylonian names, the former being Ishtar, the latter a derivative of 'Marduk'. While the story leads up to the institution of the feast of Purim, there is no direct reference to the God of Israel, or to the action of divine Providence, so generally the moral of the Biblical stories. The stage of the History of Susanna is set in Babylon. The story tells of the heroine's rescue from the lust of 'two elders of the (Jewish) people, judges', and the *dénouement* in her rescue through the legal examination made of those knaves by 'a young man Daniel'. The story is attached in the Greek to the book of Daniel. Hence Shakespeare's apothegm of 'a Daniel come to judgment!'

The story of the book of Tobit plays primarily on foreign soil, at Nineveh. It is a delightful family romance with the presentation of the Jewish *pater familias* Tobit, his wife Anna, who is quite his equal (cf. 2:11ff.), and their son Tobias. Tobias is commissioned by the father to go to Media to recover some deposits left there by the latter, and he takes wit him his dog (5:16), without doubt of the still famous Seluki

breed — the only favorable mention of the animal in the Bible. The one non-natural element in the story is the introduction of the angel Raphael (the name means 'God heals') in disguise, who serves as the son's guide. On their arrival at Ecbatana Tobias transacts successfully the business with his father's brother Raguel, is introduced to his daughter Sarah (who had had most unfortunate attempts at marriage), and marries her, with a formal writ of marriage (7:13). On their return home, following the advice of Raphael, with a medical application made from the organs of a fish caught on the way, the son is able to heal the old man's blindness. Upon the latter's death Tobias and his wife return to Ecbatana, where they enjoyed great wealth and honor.

Judith is the history of a Jewish Jeanne d'Arc. After a long exciting harem story, in which the heroine is able to frustrate the advances of her lover, the Assyrian general Holophernes, she manages to cut off his head, when he is asleep and drunk. This she exhibits to her people, taking it out of a bag. In consequence they win a great victory over the disconcerted Assyrian army. The triumph is celebrated with 'a song of praise' which Judith sings 'to my God', while she leads the women in their joyous dances, as in earlier Biblical scenes. The theme is somewhat parallel to the act of Jael the Kenite woman, celebrated in Deborah's Song. Modern novels still depend upon their predecessors for their plots.

Only brief reference may be made to the histories and stories of the heroes and martyrs of the Books of the Maccabees. Among them may be cited (2 Mac. 7) the narrative of the martyrdom of a brave woman and her seven sons, with their several defiant speeches to the Greek king Antiochus. A feast in commemoration of these Maccabaeian martyrs is still observed in the Greek Church.

CHAPTER FIVE

Men and Women of the New Testament

Jesus, 'the Word of God become flesh', is throughout the Gospels presented as a man in the midst of human society, men and women and children. We see Him with His parents in a scene of His boyhood, when at twelve years of age they took Him up to Jerusalem (Lk. 2:41ff.). At that age He had become 'a son of the Law', and so a responsible man. Upon His parents' departure homewards they find Him missing from the company (a characteristic piece of parental hurry); on the third day (so the Semitic meaning of 'after three days' — they were away one full day and two nights) they are back in Jerusalem, searching for Him, and at last find Him in the temple, 'among the teachers (rabbis), both hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard Him were amazed at His questions and answers.' Christian art, following usual fancy, has misrepresented the scene, as though He were in the centre of the group of rabbis and instructing them. But He is the intelligent boy, asking questions and in return being catechized by the interested doctors of the Law. His mother, discovering Him at last, reproaches Him for the agony He has given His parents. His so boylike, yet manly reply comes forth: 'How is it that ye sought Me? Knew ye not that I must be in My Father's house?' But 'they understood not what He said to them.' He returned home with them, and, dutifully was subject to them. 'And His mother kept all these things in her heart (i.e. mind).' In appreciating such an anecdote the critical historian may not go farther than judging whether it is true to the times and circumstances. How could this story have been invented late, with charge of the mother's ignorance,

after the history of the miraculous birth? Indeed His reply to such a mother could hardly have been an invention. A somewhat similar retort to the mother is cited in Jn. 2: 4: 'Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come.' And there is to be noted the brief objective statement on the development of His young manhood (v. 52): 'And Jesus increased in wisdom and maturity and in favor with God and man.' There is a similar statement concerning His predecessor, the boy John, that he grew up and waxed strong in spirit (1: 50).

This appearance of the boy Jesus as already well instructed in the Scriptures has a sequel. At thirty years of age he is represented as expounding the Scriptures in the synagogue of his home town Nazareth (4:16ff.). There is a vivid representation of the synagogal ritual of the time— Jewish scholarship today hardly appreciates the amount of light thrown by the Gospels upon the actual religion of that day. 'He stood up to read. And there was delivered to Him the scroll of the prophet Isaiah; and he unrolled the scroll, and found the place where was written' the text of His sermon. Then 'rolling up the scroll, He gave it back to the attendant (the synagogal *shammash*), and seated Himself,' and proceeded to expound His text. There was no question of His scholarship; 'they witnessed' to this.

Only brief reference may be made here to Jesus' parables from human life, in which He was following ancient Biblical precedent, cases of which have been cited earlier. Domestic life appears in the parables of the woman and her leaven (Mt. 13:33), and the woman who swept out her house to find one lost silver coin (Lk. 15:8ff.). The speculations of the market appear in the parable of the man who found a treasure in a field, and, selling all that he had, bought that field (Mt. 13:44), and that of the merchant who sold all that he had to buy one pearl of great price (v. 45). He takes the unfaithful steward as an example of the sharp concern His hearers should have

for their eternal welfare (Lk. 16:1ff.). The law is satirically represented in the story of the widow who had been ill treated by an adversary (18:1ff.); she presented her case to an unrighteous judge, who cared nothing, but at last he decided for her, for 'she was wearing him out' with her constant appeals. The parable of the Prodigal Son (15:11ff.) expresses the extinguishable love of a father for his son, actual instances of which passion appear in David's history. The parables from nature will be noticed in Chapter VII.

Of the Apostles it would be superfluous to write. The personalities of some of them stand forth in the Gospels as real men and they all have been immortalized since hagiology and festivals, art and architecture. The forward Simon Peter, who yet could deny His Master, the doubting Thomas, the traitor Judas, and the others with their doubts and questions and arrogance, all are faithfully depicted. Their inner selfishnesses and contrarinesses are presented in the story of the mother of Zebedee's sons, James and John, who made ambitious claim for her children's precedence in the Kingdom of Heaven (Mt. 20:20ff.). In a parallel account (Mk. 10:35ff.) the sons appear as bespeaking for themselves this claim. There is no Scriptural heroization of all these later canonized saints.

Outside of the Twelve, as formally listed, a few personal anecdotes may be recounted. There is the story (Jn. 1:43ff.) of Nathanael, whom his brother Philip finds and tells that they have found the Messiah, to which announcement Nathanael replies, 'Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?' They bring him to Jesus, who exclaims, 'Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!' To Nathanael's amazed reply, 'Whence knowest Thou me?' Jesus responds: 'Before Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.' Nathanael makes confession of Him as Son of God. The mystery of the scene under the fig tree was known only to these two parties.

A certain rich young man [variant, a certain ruler] inquired what he should do to inherit eternal life (Mt. 19:16ff., Mk. 10:17ff., Lk. 18:ff.). Upon Jesus' answer that he should sell all that he had and give to the poor, the man 'went away sorrowful, for he was one that had great possessions.' The scene inaugurated a discussion between the Master and the disciples.

Another anecdote tells of His conversation with a certain lawyer, or scribe, who made trial of him, saying, 'Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?' This appears in variant forms in Mt. 22:34ff., Mk. 12:28ff., Lk. 10:25ff. In the first two Jesus answers the question by citing the Law. But Luke has the more novel, doubtless original form, according to which Jesus asks the inquirer, 'What is written in the Law? How readest thou?' The learned and also deep-minded man gives the correct answer from the Law: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might (Dt. 6: 5), and thy neighbor as thyself (Lev. 19: 18).' Jesus replies, 'This do, and thou shalt live.' There ensues in the Lucan narrative the inquirer's further question, one which has never easily been settled by law: 'And who is my neighbor?' Jesus responds with the parable of the Good Samaritan, taking a heretic as His example. The story concludes with Jesus asking who was 'the neighbor' in the case. The inquirer answers correctly, and Jesus closes the conversation 'Go, and do thou likewise!'⁶

And there is the lively story of the chief tax gatherer, the rich Zacchaeus, who 'sought to see Jesus, and could not because of the crowd, because he was short of stature. And he ran on before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him' (Lk. 19:1ff.). Jesus hails him, and announces that He will lodge in his house for the day. The crowd murmurs: 'He is gone to lodge with a man that is a sinner.' But the publican declares his own virtue, over against the common repute of such officials, as charitable and strictly honest, and Jesus an-

nounces that 'today is salvation come to this house, for he also is a son of Abraham.' Indeed one of His Apostles, Matthew, was a publican.

With genuine continuance of the elder Israelite presentation in story and history the Gospels faithfully present the women. One court scene with its royal ladies is presented, the sequel of the prosecution of John the Baptist by Herodias, king Herod's wife, because of the prophet's denunciation of the marriage (Mt. 14:1ff., Mk. 6:14ff., cf. Lk. 3:19f.). At a great royal birthday dinner her daughter, properly instructed beforehand, dances before the company, which so pleases the king that 'he would grant her any request she may make.' She asks for the head of John, a request the king grants for the sake of the company present, but a cause of grief to him. The head is brought to her on a platter, and she gives it to her mother. An ugly scene, reminiscent of queen Jezebel; but she was a Sidonian, while the Herodian family was Jewish. Times had not much changed; we may compare the contemporary history of the Caesars.

The other women are of every-day life, of town and countryside. Jesus appealed to women as no other 'Founder of Religion' has done. Their stories are all authentic in feminine characterization. The scene of the Greek-speaking Syro-phoenician woman in her supplication for her demoniac daughter (Mt. 15:21ff., Mk. 7:24ff.) portrays the true woman in her obstinacy towards his refusal: 'I was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' She persists, 'Lord, help me!' He replies: 'It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs.' Her answer comes quick: 'Yea, Lord, but the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.' Jesus yields: 'O woman, great is thy faith,' and grants her desire, which she finds effected upon her return home. The story has the ring of veracity, with its statement of the Lord's change of mind, listening to a heathen woman's argument.

There is again the story of the very modest woman, suffering from an issue of blood, who in the crowd secretly touched His garment, and the malady at once ceased (Mt. 9:20ff., Mk. 5:25ff., Lk. 8:43ff.). Jesus knowing what had occurred, insists on identifying the person, and the woman, 'seeing that she was not hidden, came trembling, and falling down before Him declared in the presence of all the people' why she had touched Him, and how she was healed. He gave her His salutation: 'Daughter, thy faith hath healed thee. Go in peace!'

Another kind of woman appears at a Pharisee's dinner, to which Jesus was casually invited — 'a sinner' she was, well known 'in the city' (Lk. 7:36ff.). She entered the company with an alabaster cruse of ointment, and standing behind at His feet, weeping, 'she began to wet His feet, and wiped them with the hair of her head, and she kissed His feet, and anointed them with the ointment.' The gentlemanly host makes no public protest, but has his private conviction that 'this man, if He were a prophet, would have perceived what manner of woman this is that touched Him.' Jesus, reading his mind, discourses with him on the process of love, with the parable of the two debtors, and concludes with the dictum: 'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.' Again the story looks veracious, with the scene of the woman's extravagant action, the polite host's silent criticism, and the final characteristic word of Jesus.

An argumentative kind of woman is she of Samaria (Jn. 4), who at Jacob's well, finding Him to be a prophet, knowing her private life, and also a Jew, starts a theological discussion with Him *in re* the place where men ought to worship, 'this mountain', Gerizim, or Jerusalem.

One centre of family life is sketched with much detail, that of the home of Lazarus, and his sisters Martha and Mary, all three of whom 'Jesus loved' (Lk. 10:38ff., cf. Jn. 11:5). There

is the picture of the homely meal, as Martha was 'bothered with much serving' a busy housekeeper, while 'Mary sat at the Lord's feet and listened to His talk.' Martha chides the Master for not chiding the care-free sister. He responds: 'Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things. But one thing is necessary. For Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.' The distinctive characters of the two women persist in the story of the death and resurrection of Lazarus (Jn. 11:1ff.). 'Martha, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him; but Mary was sitting in the house.' The former has a reproachful conversation with the Master on the death of the brother, which He might have prevented. Later Mary comes out, and meets Jesus, and weeps. And 'Jesus wept. And the Jews said, Behold how He loved him!' There follows the raising of Lazarus. A sequel is the story of the supper given to Jesus in His friends' house, where Martha served, and Lazarus sat at the table (12:1ff.). The scene is continued with an anecdote similar to that of the sinful woman (see above), how Mary 'took a pound of ointment of pure nard, very precious, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the odor.' Judas Iscariot meanly blames her for her extravagance, and Jesus makes retort to him.

Finally women, some of them named, were witnesses of the crucifixion and the resurrection. At the former event 'many women were there beholding from afar', 'among whom were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's sons,' women who in Galilee had followed and ministered to Him (Mt. 27:55f., cf. Mk. 15:40, with Salome in place of the third named woman.)

For the resurrection several women are named as the first witnesses (with varying lists), who went to the tomb in order further to anoint the body: Mt. 28:1ff., Mary Magdalene and 'the other Mary'; Mk. 16:1ff., Mary Magdalene and the mother

of James, and Salome; Lk. 24:1ff., Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary mother of James; Jn. 20:1ff., Mary Magdalene alone. According to the last cited narrative Mary Magdalene came first to the tomb on the Sunday, and found it opened; she ran to tell Peter, and he 'and the other disciple' ran to see, and found the linen clothes lying in their place . . . They returned home. But 'Mary was standing without at the tomb, weeping. So, as she wept, she stooped, and looked into the tomb, and she beholdeth two angels in white,' who asking, 'Why weepest thou?', inform her of the resurrection of her Lord. Turning back she sees Jesus, whom she does not recognize. He asks her, 'Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?' She takes him for the gardener, and asks Him who may have taken the body away. He reveals Himself to her: 'Mary!' Her startled reply is the exclamation (the Aramaic preserved): 'Rabboni!' He bids her to tell of their meeting to 'My brothers'.

To such groups of men and women of the Gospel scenery are to be added the little children and babes. There is the thrice preserved story of the people, evidently the mothers, bringing to Jesus their little ones for blessing (Mt. 19:13ff., Mk. 10:13ff., Lk. 18:15ff.). The disciples rebuke the intruders, but Jesus contradicts them (with Mark): 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me, . . . for of such is the kingdom of heaven . . . Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of heaven as a little child shall in no wise enter therein. And He took them in His arms and blessed them, laying His hands upon them.'

Again in another scene the disciples are disputing among themselves as to which is the greatest (Mk. 9: 33ff., cf. Mt. 18:ff., Lk. 9:46ff.). He calls a little child, takes him in His arms, and sets him forth as an example of the simplicity necessary for the kingdom of heaven: 'Whosoever receiveth one of such little children in My name receiveth Me.' Finally there is the picture, true to the ancient popular ritual of the temple, of

the children joining in the jubilations of the crowd upon Jesus' royal ascent as Messiah to the Holy City. They cry out in the temple courts, 'Hosanna to the Son of David,' for which the authorities rebuke them. Jesus pertinently cites Ps. 8:2. For such a scene of children in the temple cf. Ps. 148:11ff. Also for the picture of child life in those days may be recalled the divine announcement to the prophet Zechariah (8: 5) how in the restored Jerusalem 'the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its broadways.' It is in these 'broadways' that the heroine of the Song of Songs would go to seek her lover (3:2).

Such is the human stage of the outstanding Figure of the Gospels. The Acts of the Apostles continues with the history of His Church, as it slowly developed from status as a 'sect' of Jewry. (For this word, used also of Pharisees and Sadducees, see 5:17; 24:5; 26:5; 28:22.) The composer of the compilation, Luke, was dear friend and companion of Paul, but he offers a true picture of the actors without grudging or varnishing.

The first chapter presents the concourse of the apostles in 'the upper chamber' (the Oriental first floor is a dark vault), where they 'with one accord continued steadfastly in prayer, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brethren.' From the beginning of the Church the women took a public and active part in the congregational life, such as they did not enjoy in the synagogue. According to 5:14 'multitudes both of men and women were added to the church.' The immediately preceding story tells of the first public sin of the believers, that of Ananias and his wife Sapphira. The subsequent scenes center about personalities, Peter and John, Stephen, Philip, finally Saul, who came to be called Paul (13:9), Barnabas, his spokesman to the apostles, and for long his companion. It was he who went off to Tarsus to look for Saul and to bring him back to Antioch, where 'the disciples were first called Christians' (11:19ff.). There are two pictures

of women in this history. One was Tabitha-Dorcas, 'a woman full of good works and almsdeeds,' who died (9:36ff.). Peter was summoned, and came into her chamber, where 'all the widows (cf. 6:1) stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was yet alive.' Peter, 'putting them all out,' revived the woman, and presented her alive to 'the saints and widows.' The other woman is the maidservant Rhoda, in the story of the miraculous release of Peter from prison (12:1ff.), how, when the apostle came to the home of Mary, mother of John-Mark, he knocked on the door, and the maid recognized his voice, 'but opened not the gate for joy, and ran in, and told that Peter stood before the gate.' They doubted her, but found her right.

The apostle Saul-Paul is introduced in ch. 9, with his vision on the road to Damascus. There may be noted an interim in his stay in that city, how he 'went away into Arabia' (Gal. 1:17), doubtless for religious devotion in the desert, after the example of Moses and Elijah and Jesus. Otherwise his life is one of public record. His continuous biography begins in ch. 13 (cf. 9:26ff.), with his and Barabas's initial mission to the Gentile world. The latter was his spokesman, introducing him to the church in Jerusalem. Chapter 15 records the first ecclesiastical act for control of the wide-spreading Church. James acted as moderator, and unanimity was reached on the practical question of mission to the Gentiles. But the conclusion of the chapter tells of 'a sharp contention' that arose between Paul and Barnabas on a personal matter, and their separation for different regions of activity.

Paul and his fellows in their peregrinations reached Macedonia, and stayed at Philippi for some days (16:11ff.). On the sabbath they went down to the river bank, 'where we understood there was a place of prayer; and we sat down, and spake to the women that were come thither.' One of the congregation was a certain Lydia, 'a seller of purple, of the city of

'Thyatire, one that worshipped God,' who believed, and was baptized along with her household. Then she constrained them to become her guests. This is the first recorded instance of the baptism of a woman. This lady's position in that conventicle of prayer was typical of conditions in the Diaspora through the Greek world, where women had greater social liberty than in the Orient. To such women proselytes the Gospel especially appealed. The sacramental equality in baptism must have had its part in dignifying the status of women in the Church.

Subsequently at Thessalonica they preached in the synagogue on three sabbaths, and among the converts were 'of the devout Greeks (proselytes) a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few' (17: 1ff.). A similar statement of conversion of 'Greek women of honorable estate' is recorded for their mission to Beroea (vv. 10ff.).

Paul came to Corinth (ch. 18), and met a certain Jew there, Aquila and his wife Priscilla, exiles from Rome, with whom he stayed, being as tentmaker of the same trade with them. They accompanied him to Ephesus, where he left them, returning to Antioch. At Ephesus was an eloquent expounder of Scriptures, Apollos, whom the couple were able to convert. In this episode Priscilla is named before her husband, as also in 2 Tim. 4:19; as frequently in the life of the Church the woman is more important than her man. The same Apollos appears later in the contentions about the apostles (1 Cor. 1:10ff.; 3:1ff.).

On the party's return to Jerusalem they stopped at Tyre (21:3ff.), and on their departure the Christians 'all, with their wives and children,' accompanied them down to the beach, and bade them an affectionate farewell. At Ptolemais they stayed with Philip the evangelist, who 'had four virgin daughters, who prophesied.' For such feminine activity cf. 1 Cor. 11:5. In the subsequent account of travel courtly life is truly presented by the personal interest that the governor Felix and his

wife Drusilla, a Jewess, take in Paul (24:24ff.), but this evidently of the wife's honest concern, for Felix expected a bribe. Again in the presentation of Paul's case by the governor Festus before king Agrippa (cc. 25f.), the latter is accompanied formally by his wife Bernice, and she takes part in the consideration of the case (25:13; 23:30ff.).

The epilogues of Paul's Epistles have lists of persons, to whom he sends personal greetings, or of whom he makes mention, also salutations from members of his own company. A large number of these persons are women. The most extensive list (Rom. 16) begins with a long encomium of 'Phoebe our sister, deaconess of the church at Cenchreae.' According to 1 Cor. 1:11ff. he had heard 'from them of Chloe's household' (a lady the head of the house!) of the 'contentions among you.' In Phil. 4:2f. he 'exhorts Euodia and Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord,' with added request to the addressee of the letter, to 'help these women, for they labored much with me in the gospel.' In Col. 4:14 there is reference to 'Luke the beloved physician', and, v. 17, a warning to a certain Archippos to take heed to his ministry. In 2 Tim. 4:10 he speaks of Demas, 'who forsook me, having loved the present world,' and (v. 14) of Alexander the coppersmith, 'who did me much harm.' Also 1 Peter concludes with salutations from the apostle group.

Finally the book of Revelation refers, inauspiciously and anonymously, to only one person, and that 'the woman Jezebel who calleth herself a prophetess, and teacheth and seduceth my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols' (3:18ff.), the first, but not the only woman heresiarch in the history of the Church.

Thus the early history of the Church, like all its subsequent chronicles, was stage of all kinds of humanity with their virtues and faults, loves and rancors (cf. Cor. 12:20), of the best of them none claimed or claiming to be perfect; many stumbling,

some falling. With Paul they ran in a race to receive the prize (1 Cor. 9:24).

CHAPTER SIX

The Ego of the Psalms

The Hebrew title of the Psalms, *tehillim* means praise-songs, exactly the Greek-Latin 'hymns', having the same root as in *halleluiab*, 'Praise ye Yah.' The Greek verb with which 'psalm' is connected means to play the harp, and the verb to the corresponding Hebrew noun, *mizmor*, which constantly appears in the Psalm titles and is translated 'psalm' (Ps. 3, etc.), has the same meaning. In this connection it may be remarked that the harp was merely the accompaniment to the song; the latter varied in metre, unlike Classical and most modern poetry, presenting the changing impulses of the singer, and the harp followed suit. The dominating, often tiresome, tune of modern hymns and songs was absent in that ancient music. There the singer's feelings prevailed, and, as particularly in the Psalms, could follow his rapidly changing moods. Browning's *Saul* well presents the affective character of that music of the harp.

The Psalms, which have been rather ignored in the synagogue, have survived in the Christian Church not merely as Holy Scriptures to be read and mused over, but as the primary collection of hymns, whether chanted as in the Catholic tradition, Greek, Latin, Anglican, or rendered into metrical translations. Indeed the 'Psalms in Metre', as the translations were called, were for long the only collection of acknowledged hymns in the English-speaking Churches, and many of them remain as such, some of them the most beloved of our hymns.

The title of the collection in the Anglican Prayer Book is 'The Psalter or Psalms of David'! This attribution follows a generalizing usage in ancient Jewry, as in the attribution of the Pentateuch to Moses, and was adopted popularly in the Church.

For citations of the tradition of David as 'a skillful player on the harp' Chapter IV may be consulted. Actually seventy-three Psalms (the Greek Bible adds to the number) have in the title the attribution 'David's', and along with this in ten cases (Pss. 3, 7, 18, 30, 34, 51, 52, 56, 57, 59) reference to the incident inducing the composition. One Psalm (90) is ascribed to Moses, two (72, 127) to Solomon. All such personal attributions are apocryphal, we know nothing personally of the Psalmists, except as they reveal themselves.⁷ The assignment in the titles to Asaph, Heman, Ethan, the Sons of Korah, refer to temple choirs. Similar poetical compositions appear elsewhere in the Bible assigned to named authors and circumstances, for example the Song of Moses with the accompanying chant of Miriam and the women (Ex. 15), another Song of Moses (Dt. 32), Hannah's thanksgiving (1 Sam. 2), David's Song (2 Sam. 22 = Ps. 18), Hezekiah's thanksgiving (Is. 38), Jonah's prayer (Jon. 2). In the Apocrypha are the Song of the Three Holy Children, introduced into ch. 3 of Daniel, and the Prayer of Jesus ben Sirach appended to Ecclesiasticus; in the New Testament the Magnificat, the Benedictus, and Simeon's prayer (Lk. cc. 1, 2). For the early Church like collections have been preserved as in the Odes, and the Psalms, of Solomon. There was thus a long genuine continuance of religious poesy.

The Psalms are of primarily liturgical origin, for use in the temple services, and in cases are connected with official ceremonies like the sacred enthronement of the king, in the so-called Royal Psalms (2, 18, 21, 45, 72, 101, 110, 132, 144: 1-11). The references to the temple rites, to the clerical orders and choirs, to the congregations of worshippers, with the parts, easily recognized, taken by these severally in oratoric style, are numerous. On the other hand there are the many Psalms that are primarily the outpourings of individual hearts, in faith, in penitence, in doubt and struggle with the ways of God, in

praise and thanksgiving, above all in love. (It may be observed that the human love for God is expressed more frequently in the Old Testament, e.g. Dt. 6: 4, Pss. 18: 3, 116: 1, while God's love for man is the more frequent theme in the New Testament, e.g. Jn. 2: 16.) Such Psalms had doubtless their background in connection with sacred rites, as confessionals, paeans, and the like, but they passed on into the field of private utterance. They became formal Psalms in the Jewish corpus in the same way that many hymns of the Church were primarily outpourings of the individual heart, for self-relief and self-expression, in penitence, query, gratitude, praise, coming only later to be publicized, set to music, adopted and adapted for ecclesiastical use.

In the general consideration of the Bible certain factors stand dominantly forth. In the Old Testament there are the Law and the Prophets, and the Wise Men, the Hebrew philosophers; in the New the evangelical history of the Lord Jesus, and the Epistles of apostles and others, speaking with accepted authority. Definite personalities are connected by tradition with most of these sections of the literature, from Moses down. But in the background of that panorama there is another element, in the Old Covenant the 'quiet' and 'humble of the land', in the New 'the faithful' and 'the saints'. Of these Christian lay people we learn much individually from the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles. For that field there are sufficient data to realize the congregational life of the actual Church, which Paul pictures, with gratified comment, as addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts into the Lord (Eph. 5:19, cf. Col. 3:16). This voluntary psalm-singing was a direct inheritance from the Jewish Church.

For that earlier mother-religion we may naturally be overwhelmed by the central prospect of the temple and its elaborate ritual. Consequently we ignore the informal, deep spiritual

life that also centred there, as in the sanctuaries, cathedrals and parish shrines of the Catholic Churches, a fact too much ignored by later Protestant thought. In Lk. 2 is the account of the devout Simeon, who 'came in the Spirit into the temple,' when the child Jesus was brought there for the ritual of His mother's purification, and who, 'taking him in his arms, blessed God,' and broke out in the *Nunc Dimittis*. The same chapter tells of the aged widow, Anna, 'a prophetess . . . who departed not from the temple, worshipping with fastings and supplications night and day,' who also, like Simeon, 'gave thanks unto God' for the sight of the child. It seems remarkable that there was provision for the habitat of a woman in the temple purlieus.

The Gospel scenes constantly present Jesus as preaching in those courts. And this privilege of unofficial, spontaneous expression of religion is pictured for the young Church, while it was still a Jewish 'sect'. According to Acts 2:46 the believers 'day by day continued steadfastly with one accord in the temple.' The following chapter tells with much detail how Peter and John going up to the temple at the ninth hour, the time for the afternoon service, healed a lame man, and preached to the people. They were brought to trial before the highpriest Annas and fellow priests (ch. 4), not on grounds of desecration of the temple, but for alleged false doctrine.

A personal mystical experience in the temple is narrated by Paul. Upon his return to Jerusalem (Acts 21:17ff.), when he took part in the ritual purification of certain believers in the temple, and was arrested by the mob for profaning the sanctuary, he made 'in the Hebrew (i.e. Aramaic) language' his *apologia*, given at length in ch. 22. In this (vv. 17ff.) he relates how on his earlier return from Damascus to Jerusalem, 'while I prayed in the temple, I fell into a trance [Greek, ecstasy], and saw Him,' with reference to 'the Righteous One', whom Ananias, his baptizer, had promised that he would 'see

and hear.' He proceeds to narrate the dialogue between himself and that mystical One. For a previous like experience involving a great mission Isaiah's vision in the temple is to be compared (Is. 6). With the temple courts such a *rendez-vous* of the pious we may well envisage among them poet-musicians singing their lays before attracted coteries. Such spontaneous outpourings were continued in the early Church, as observed above. As a matter of fact, the Gospels and Acts offer a picture of the religion connected with the second temple that no Jewish authorities present, and which Christians since have not sufficiently realized.

The relation of the Psalms and their composers to the temple worship has been and still is a moot question among scholars. Many Psalms are distinctly liturgical, with parts for voices and choirs. Others are so personal, seemingly so 'spiritual', that they appear to be independent of any liturgical connection. Yet many of the most spiritual Psalms have that relation in a profound mysticism. The following instances may be briefly cited.

Psalm 15. 'Yahweh, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in Thy holy hill?' The poet answers his own question: 'He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth from his heart,' etc.

Psalm 23. This Psalm, 'Yahweh is my shepherd,' with its English rendering by H. W. Baker, 'The King of love my Shepherd is,' is probably the Christian favorite in the whole collection. There is the intimate pastoral picture of the shepherd and his sheep (cf. Jesus' parable), but the poet's concluding aspiration is that 'I shall dwell in the house of Yahweh for ever.'

Psalm 26. 'Judge me, O Yahweh, for I have walked in mine integrity. I have trusted in Yahweh without sliding. Examine me, O Yahweh, and prove me. Try out my reins and my heart.' He asserts his hate of hypocrites and evil-doers but for

himself to the contrary: 'I will wash my hands in innocence; so will I compass Thine altar, to publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all Thy wondrous works.' Then his passion breaks forth: 'O Yahweh, I love the habitation of Thy house, and the place of the tabernacle of Thy Glory.' And as *finale*: 'In the congregations will I bless Yahweh.' With this last apostrophe is to be compared 35:18, in which, after a long personal lamentation the singer hopes 'to give Thee thanks in a great congregation, to praise Thee in a mighty people.'

Psalm 27. The introduction, 'Yahweh is my light and my salvation, Whom then shall I fear?', expresses the chief desire of the singer, 'one thing' that he 'asked of Yahweh,' namely that 'I dwell in the house of Yahweh, to behold the graciousness of Yahweh, and to inquire [the verb is used of seeking oracles] in His temple.'

Psalms 42, 43 (originally one composition, as the chorus proves). This ode is the utterance of a soul exiled from its sacred home. It opens with:

'As panteth the hart for the water brooks,
So panteth my soul after Thee, O Yahweh,
My soul thirsteth for Yahweh, the God of my life:
When shall I come and see God's Presence?'

He 'remembers, from the land of Jordan and the Hermons' how in past days he 'went with the throng, and led them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and thanksgiving, a multitude making pilgrimage' (this participial expression is identical with the Muslim 'keeping the Hajj'). The final stanza repeats again his ardent language:

'Send out Thy light and Thy truth,
They, may they lead me!
Bring me to Thy holy mount,
Even to Thy dwellings,
That I may come to the altar of Yahweh,
To God, the delight of my joy,

And praise Thee with harp,
O Yahweh, my God!

Psalm 54. 'Save me, O God, for the waters are come into my soul . . . Behold, God is my helper . . . against strangers and violent men.' When they are destroyed, 'with a freewill offering will I sacrifice to Thee, Give thanks to Thy name, for it is good.'

Psalm 69. It is a question whether this is a personal lamentation, or, with the epilogue (vv. 35f.), 'God will save Sion,' one in the name of the Holy City. With omission of these verses, which fit the Psalm for liturgical use, the hymn appears wholly personal. There may be noted these apparent contrasts of thought: v. 9, 'The zeal of Thy house hath eaten me up, And the reproaches of Thy reproachers have fallen upon me,' and, vv. 30ff., there is the quite non-ritualistic theme that the poet's praise 'will please Yahweh better than ox or bullock.' Such is the devout man's spiritual discovery.

Psalm 84. This spontaneous hymn opens with:

'How lovely are Thy tabernacles,

O Yahweh of Hosts!

My soul longeth, yea fainteth for Yahweh's courts,

My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God,

Yea, the sparrow hath found her a house,

And the swallow a nest for herself, where she hath
laid her young,

Even Thine altars, O Yahweh of Hosts,

My King and my God.

Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house,

Constantly praising Thee.'

The poet is one of Nature's own; he sees the birds nesting in the temple courts. The tidy-keeping janitors of the sanctuary would not so have expressed themselves. The singer desiderates such a home for himself:

'A day in Thy courts is better than a thousand.

I would rather be a threshold worshipper in my
God's house

Than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.'

That is, he would rather be just an onlooker or proselyte.

Psalm 116. This opens with: 'I love it that Yahweh hears my voice, my supplication.' The poet presents his concern in 'trouble and sorrow', when 'I said in my panic: All men are liars.' To the query what return he shall make to Yahweh he makes answer to himself:

'I will take the cup of salvation,
And call upon the Name of Yahweh.
I will pay my vows unto Yahweh
Right now before all His people,
In the courts of Yahweh's house,
In thy midst, O Jersusalem.'

There are a few cases of ascension of the saint's spirit above the temple ritual, even in stated contradiction to it, notably in Ps. 51, vv. 16f.:

'For Thou desirest no sacrifice for me to give,
Thou hast no pleasure in burnt offering.
The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit,
A broken and contrite heart,
O God, Thou wilt not despise.'

The *finale*, vv. 18f., appears to be a corrective to these, looking forward to the resumption of sacrifices in Sion. The inward meaning of this apparent contradiction of the ritual appears in 69:30f. (cited above), and in 141:2: 'Let my prayer be set before Thee as incense, the lifting up of my hands as an evening oblation.' The logical conclusion is not drawn that sacrifice is unnecessary, only that something else is higher. An ascension of the spirit appears notably in Pss. 90 and 91. Psalm 90: 'Yahweh, Thou hast been our abode in all generation'; the Hebrew for 'abode' (or dwelling-place) is used generally of the temple, e.g. Ps. 68:5, but here God Himself

appears as the home of the saints. And so Isaac Watts in his hymn, a version of this Psalm, 'O God, our help in ages past,' beautifully translates the phrase with 'our eternal home'; cf. Jesus' word (Jn. 14:2), 'In my Father's house are many abiding.' Psalm 91 is introduced with a phrase appositive to the subject of the following verb, an ego: 'He that dwelleth in the covert of the Highest (cf. 32:7; 119:114), Abideth in the shadow of the Almighty:— I will say of Yahweh, My refuge and my fortress, My God, in whom I trust.' The Psalmist declares his mystical retreat into the bosom of God. The influence of the Prophets has been claimed for these spiritual uplifts, but such aspirations may well be native to those saints.

Also from this sense of the present fellowship with God there are transports to the faith in the everlasting endurance of that relation, a happy immortality. This over against the constant and repellent prospect of death, as in Ps. 39 at length. The following instances may be cited. Psalm 16:10f.:

'Thou wilt not abandon my soul to Sheol,
Nor suffer Thy devotee (*chasid*) to see corruption.
Thou wilt show me the path of life,
Fulness of joy with Thy Presence,
Pleasures at Thy right hand for ever.'

Ps. 49:15, over against the prospect of death as the common lot: 'God will redeem my soul from the hand of Sheol, For He will take me.' Ps. 73:24: 'With Thy counsel wilt Thou lead me, And afterwards to glory take me . . . (v. 26b) God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.' The common verb 'take' (EVV more formally 'receive') is the same as that used of the translation of Enoch, who 'walked with God, and he was not, for God took him' (Gen. 5:24), and so again in the story of the ascension of Elijah (2 Ki. 2:5, 10), and that of the ascension of Jesus (Mk. 16:19, where the Greek uses the same verb as in translating Elijah's ascension). These religious mounted upwards on the wings of their own

inspired faith. There is to be compared a similar transport of soul in Job 19:25ff. (a passage difficult for interpretation because of its passionate character — I repeat from an article of mine in *Harv. Theol. Rev.*, 1941:321f.): 'I know that my Champion liveth, and at the last He shall stand upon the earth . . . Then without my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see on my side, and mine eyes shall behold Him, no stranger!' There follows the relapse from this ascent of the soul: 'My reins are consumed within me!'

In taking up the immediate subject of the Chapter, it may be noted that ninety Psalms contain the human ego. This figure includes cases of the self-expression of the poet-laureate in the introduction of two Royal Psalms. Psalm 45: 'My heart stirs [the verb is also used of boiling] with a goodly theme. I [emphatic] speak my poem for the King. My tongue is the pen of a ready scribe.' (The Hebrew for 'poem' is something 'made', a composition, and so identical with Greek *poiema*.) Psalm 110: 'Yahweh said to my lord; Sit at My right hand.' In the alphabetic Psalm 34 the poet appears as a teacher (v. 11): 'Come, ye little children, hearken unto me. I will teach you the fear [i.e. religion] of Yahweh.' Such Psalms were for memoriter instruction. On the other hand the divine ego is comparatively rare, occurring mostly in dramatic compositions. There are a few cases of divine oracle in the first person; e.g. Pss. 2; 87:4; 95:8ff.; 108:7-9; 110. The Psalmists are thus the opposite of the Prophets with their 'Thus saith Yahweh.'

The personal experiences suffered by these saints, from which they implore the refuge in God, make the Psalter a most human book. They are the sufferings that humanity has ever experienced, and for which it has no adequate explanation. The Psalmists in general confess their sins, yet the evils they suffer appear to be out of all due proportion to their demerits. For them there was the eternal problem of the righteousness of

God in practical experience. There are the commonplaces of grievous illness, of the prospect of death. Above all bulk large 'the enemies', who persecute the saint to his undoing and wish him all ill. It has been proposed that the 'evil' that is prayed against was magic wrought by enemies. The narrowness of ancient Oriental communal society may partly account for these many unfriendly experiences, which then were magnified by the hypersensitive soul of the saint, who finds it hard to discover that others are not as good as himself. We may compare the personal troubles that Thomas à Kempis appears to have experienced in his monastic life. The references to these enemies may in time have become a commonplace theme in such distracted prayers. A typical instance appears in Ps. 41:5-9. Yet here is recorded an actual personal experience: 'Mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted . . . hath made big his heel against me.' Such poets can find justification of the divine righteousness in the damnation and destruction of such enemies, which they proceed to invoke. The problem is one that busies the speculations of the philosophers, Job and the Preacher. But here we find simple poets expressing themselves out of their immediate quests and agonies. They appeal to 'the simple folk' more directly than do the philosophers.

The Psalter is a collection in which the poets speak to God and of God, with only occasional responses from Him. He is their objective in all their various moods. In their creed there is nothing new: 'There is no God but Yahweh, and He is Israel's God.' But the novelty is that the marvel of man is discovered and explored by them, and so for us, along with the corresponding ascension of soul. The intense problem remains, as always in higher religion, of the relationship, comradeship of God and man. Two Psalms may be noticed here.

The poet of Psalm 8, after surveying with astonishment and praise the Creator's work in the universe (on which see

Chapter VII), exclaims: 'What is man that Thou mindest him, And the human that Thou accountest him? . . . Yet Thou hast made him a little lower than Deity, And crowned him with honor and dignity.' The philosophers of Greece and Rome came to such higher anthropology, yet this in spite of popular religion, according to which man was not much better than the beasts which perish. But our poet is no philosopher; he makes his humble, and yet proud confession: 'Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained strength,' and what he sings is for 'the stilling of the enemy and avenger.' He is the champion of God and man. Psalm 139:

VV. 1-7.

'Yahweh, Thou hast searched me and knowest,
It is Thou who knowest my sitting and rising,
Thou understandest my thought from afar.
My path and my lying down Thou measurest,
And with all my ways Thou art intimate.
Thou hast enclosed me behind and before,
And laid Thy hand upon me —
A knowledge too marvelous for me,
Too exalted, I am not able for it!
Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit,
And whither from Thy presence flee?'

There follows, vv. 8-12, the statement of the inescapability from God, in heaven and earth and sea, in light and darkness.

VV. 13-15.

'For Thou didst create my reins,
Didst knit me in my mother's womb.
I will praise Thee for I am marvelously made
. . . [with abbreviation of an obscure text]
Marvelous are Thy works,
As my soul knoweth right well.
My frame was not hidden from Thee,
When I was made in secret,

Interwoven in depths of earth.'

V. 16 is difficult. The first line can be read, 'Thine eyes did see my embryo,' but what follows is not consonant. Critics have changed the Hebrew of 'my embryo' to 'all my days', in connection with the following 'are written in Thy book,' i.e. of the divine foresight for the singer's future. And there follows the expression of fascination:

VV. 17f.

'And to me how weighty are Thy thoughts, O God,
How mighty their sum!

Should I count them, they are more than the sand. —

I awake, and still I am with Thee!

The poem appears to be a morning soliloquy. VV. 19-22 express the saint's hatred of sinners, 'who hate Thee, Yahweh.' He concludes with prayer for the divine examination of his heart and conduct of his life for evermore:

VV. 23f.

'Search me, O God, and know my heart,

Try me, and know my thoughts;

And see if there be any grievous (?) way in me,

And lead me in the way everlasting!

The composition is typical of the passionate, changing moods of the Psalmists, and of the difficulty in defining their psychological language.

The Psalms range over the fields of the two Unknowns. They begin with God, and proceed to the inquisition and criticism of man — unlike the method of modern science. Starting from the divine dogma of the Bible at large the Psalmists offer the revelation of man in terms of feeling and wonderment and music, in which all men, 'the simple', and 'the great congregations' can take part. Their poetry is the human confession of both God and self.

In connection with the Psalmists' deep concern over the relationship of God and man it is to be observed that the

distinction of the two is absolute in the Bible, there is none of the confusion between the two parties as in the Pagan religions and the Classical literatures, where gods become men, and men gods. In the Bible they are distinct, and yet marvelously related. The distinction is absolute, until in the faith of the Gospel the Word of God became flesh in Jesus, and yet Jesus in His origin still remains distinct. The relation is drawn closer, but the mystery is deepened. For the Christian Paul the problem remains in this life, to be resolved in the future (1 Cor. 13:12): 'Now we see by a mirror indirectly [Greek 'in enigma'] but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then shall I comprehend, even as I am comprehended.'

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Revelation of God in Nature

The word 'revelation' has come to be used very technically in religious language. In its supreme meaning it expresses the vision of Deity Himself. Such phenomena appear particularly in the history of Moses, e.g. Ex. 33:11: 'And Yahweh spoke to Moses face to face as a man speaketh to his friend.' There is to be compared Jacob's earlier experience at Peniel, 'The Face of God' (Gen. 32:22ff.). But this 'face to face' revelation is sobered down in Ex. 33:17ff., when Moses requests, 'Show me Thy Glory!', and Yahweh responds: 'It shall be, when My Glory passeth by, that I will put thee in the cleft of the rock, and I will cover thee with My hand, until I have passed by. And I will take away My hand, and thou shalt see My back, but My face shall not be seen.' Indeed the word 'face' should rather in general be translated with 'presence', as it is at times rendered in the English Bible (e.g. Ex. 33:14f.), or with 'person' as in the English of 2 Sam. 17:11 with 'that thou go to battle in thine own person,' where the Hebrew is exactly, 'that thy person go.' The Greek has the like equivalence of 'face' and 'person' and so in the New Testament, 2 Cor. 1:11, with the translation, 'many persons'. The frequent 'Glory' of Yahweh is the aura of the divine Presence. It was 'the Glory of Yahweh' that like a cloud 'filled the house of Yahweh' at its consecration (1 Ki. 8:10f.). And in this sanctuary Isaiah had his initial vision (Is. 6): 'In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw Yahweh (with correction of Hebrew 'the Lord'), sitting upon a high and exalted throne, and His skirts filling the sanctuary.' It was but a passing vision, for which the prophet's senses were not fitted. 'The foundations of the

temple shook . . . and the house was filling with smoke,' and he cried, 'Woe is me, for mine eyes have seen the King, Yahweh Sebaoth.'

Again the frequent 'Angel of Yahweh' is a manifestation form of Deity; e.g. the story of the divine revelation to Hagar (Gen. 16:7ff.) is introduced with the appearance to her of the Angel, but in the conclusion she identifies him with Yahweh, as the one 'who spoke to me', and addresses Him as 'God of (my) vision'. The hosts of angels that appear later in the Bible, some with personal identification (Michael, Raphael, Gabriel), are a subsequent development of thought and theology. They replace the Sons of God of old mythical language. Hence the interpretation of such transgressing deities presented in Gen. 6 as 'fallen angels', from the Apocryphal book of Enoch and on, and for English letters in Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

With more divine restraint, the revelation is by 'a voice' as in the revelation on Sinai (Ex. 19:19ff.), when 'Yahweh descended in fire,' and Moses spoke, and the Deity answered him 'by a voice'. There follows the divine utterance of the Decalogue. And it was on the same Mount of God that Elijah was vouchsafed his revelation (1 Ki. 19:8ff.): 'A great and strong wind rent the mountains . . . but Yahweh was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake; but Yahweh was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, but Yahweh was not in the fire. And after the fire a still small voice.' Elijah went forth from the cave, with his face covered, 'and, lo, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?' The voice was Yahweh's (vv. 15ff.). For another instance may be noted 'the voice of one calling' in the introduction to the apocalypse of Second Isaiah (Is. 40). *Per contra*, a poet discovers that Voice in Nature (Ps. 29): 'The Voice of Yahweh is upon the waters . . . The Voice of Yahweh is in might . . . breaketh the cedars of Lebanon,' and

so forth.

Particularly in the Prophets the revelation is by the spoken 'Word of Yahweh', through 'His speaking to them'. There is an interesting combination of the ocular and the oracular in the title of the book of Isaiah: 'The vision of Isaiah ben Amoz, what he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem,' followed with the introduction, 'Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for Yahweh hath spoken'; with which is to be compared the preface to ch. 2: 'The word that Isaiah b. A. saw.' The full and permanent personification of the Word appears in its application to Jesus, the Son of God, in the introduction to John's Gospel. We may compare the poetical amplification of the theme in the seer's vision of the one whose 'name is called, The Word of God' (Rev. 19:13), whose 'voice is as the voice of many waters' (1:15).

Subsequently the word 'revelation' came to be used technically of extensive visions of the future, as in the correctly entitled Apocalypse of John. In this class are to be included, for example, Eze. 40ff., with the introductory statement that 'in divine visions He brought me into the land of Israel'; and Dan. 7ff., introduced with the statement of Daniel's 'dreams and visions', and how then 'he wrote the dreams, and summed up the details,' that is, wrote the following composition. And the written books of such revelations are asserted to be verbally inspired; Dan. 12:4, 'O Daniel, shut up the word, and seal the book, even to the times of the end!' And John's Revelation concludes (22:18ff.) with a curse on whosoever adds to, or subtracts from, 'the words of the book of this prophecy'. Of another literary style from the objective, often dry and turgid character of these apocalypses, and many others in Post-Judaic literature, is the apocalyptic oratorio of the 'Second Isaiah' (Is. 40ff.). Of the person of its author we know nothing more than we do of the poets of the Psalter.

Another form of revelation is through the Spirit of God,

for which divine activity may be used the many-sided word, inspiration. The noun 'spirit' means in Hebrew primarily 'breath', 'air' (cf. the Greek and Latin equivalents). The first appearance of the theme in the Bible is in Gen. 1:2, when at creation 'the Spirit of God moved upon the waters,' i.e. a physical energy; cf. Job 33:4, 'the spirit of God made me.' Then it becomes a dynamic moral energy, impelling the heroes of Israel, e.g. Jud. 3:10 (Othniel), 11:29 (Jephthah). The Spirit also gives inspiration to the artist, as in the furnishing of the Tabernacle (Ex. 31:1ff.), and Wisdom inspires the wise with her 'spirit' (Ps. 1:23). But most extensively it appears as endowment of the prophet, e.g. Hos. 9:7, where 'prophet' is parallel with 'man of the Spirit', and also the stimulus of frenzied 'prophesying' as in Num. 11:17, 25ff. It is the inspiration of the Writing Prophets, e.g. Is. 48:16, 'Yahweh hath sent me and His Spirit'; 61:1, 'the Spirit of Yahweh is upon me.' In the New Testament the mission of Jesus begins with the vision of the Spirit (Mt. 3:16f.): 'He saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him. And lo; a voice out of the heavens, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' And in sequence 'Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness.' In the New Covenant this subject becomes a definite theological theme, embracing, as it does, all believers. In replacement of His physical presence Jesus promised the gift of the Spirit (Acts 1:5, cf. Jn. 20:22f.), a promise materialized on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). The inspiration by the Spirit of the new Christian life and community is fully presented in Acts and the Pauline Epistles. To the Son as a 'face' or 'presence' of Deity is now added the Spirit, on which aggregation is based the subsequently developed doctrine of the Trinity.

For the philosophers of Israel there is the abundant personification of Wisdom-Sophia. This phase of revelation may be named illumination: it quickens all the spiritual potentialities

of man. Proverbs, ch. 8, presents Wisdom's proclamation of herself to the simple and the foolish. She asserts (vv. 22f.) that 'Yahweh created me in the beginning of His way, Before His work of old. I was set up from the beginning, Before the earth was.' Then in sketching the details of God's creation of the depths, the earth, the vault of the skies above, she tells of her part in the architecture of the universe (vv. 30ff.):

'And I was with Him, a foster-child,
And I was full of delight,
Playing always before Him.
Playing in the world of His earth
And my delight with the sons of men.'

Wisdom, though created from of old, is depicted not as an ancient, gray-haired female, but as a sprightly nymph. And further (vv. 34ff.):

'Blessed is the man that heareth me,
Watching daily at my gates,
Watching at my door posts.
For whosoever findeth me, findeth life,
And shall obtain favor from Yahweh.'

The personification of Wisdom as artist of her palace, bidding all to be her guests, goes to a dramatic extreme in the following chapter (9:1ff.):

'Wisdom hath builded her house,
Hath hewn out her seven pillars.
She hath killed her beasts,
Mixed her wine,
Also furnished her table.
She crieth upon the high tops of the city:
Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither!
The void of undersanding, she saith to him:
She hath sent forth her maidens,
Come ye; eat of my bread,
And drink of the wine I have mixed.'

It is an invitation to philosophy in the ancient sense of the word.

The poet of the Book of Wisdom is particularly enamored of the divine Spirit, as in 6:12:

'Wisdom is radiant, and fadeth not away,
And easily is she beheld by her lovers,
And found by her suitors.'

The following chapters continue this passionate eulogy of Wisdom. Only a few citations may be given. Ch. 7: 25ff.:

'For she is breath of the power of God,
And pure effluence of the Almighty's glory.
Therefore nothing defiled intrudes upon her.
For she is radiance of eternal light,
And unspotted mirror of God's working,
And image of His goodness.

And, though one, she can do all things,
And, abiding by herself, reneweth all things;
And from generation to generation passing into holy souls,
She maketh friends of God and prophets.'

From the keynote of the first citation above Chapter 8 presents a rapturous picture of Wisdom, loved by the poet and by God (vv. 2ff.):

'Her I fell in love with, and sought from my youth,
And I sought to take her for my bride,
And I became enamored of her beauty.
She glorifieth noble birth; given her, it is, to live with God,
And the Sovereign Lord of all loveth her,
For she is initiated in the knowledge of God.'

And Wisdom has become his bride (v. 16):

'When I come into my house,
I shall find rest with her,
For converse with her hath no bitterness,
And to live with her no pain, but gladness and joy.'

This later Jewish thought must have been impregnated with the Sophia-Wisdom of the Greek world, for the Jews were

world-citizens. However, the theme is entirely domesticated. The unity of God and the harmony of His universe inspired the Hebrew poetic genius. But the wisdom of these wise men did not expand in the fields of logic and science and politics as did the Greek philosophy.

Ecclesiasticus 24:1ff. voices the self-praise of Wisdom, who, in the climax, finds herself incorporated in the Book of the Covenant. Early Christian thought naturally found Wisdom incarnated in the Christ, who is, with Paul, 'the Wisdom of God' (1 Cor. 1:24), and this interpretation makes the introduction to the Epistle to the Hebrews.

In sequence all these varieties of revelation have been thought of as written down and summed up in a book, Holy Scriptures, the Book of Revelation. This long process traditionally began with the divine inscription of the Ten Commandments: 'And He gave to Moses, when He finished speaking with him upon Mount Sinai, the two tables of the testimony, tables of stone, written with God's finger' (Ex. 31:18, cf. Dt. 4:13; 5:22). Again, Moses is claimed by Deuteronomy as its scribe, 'writing the words of this law in a book,' and depositing it alongside of the ark (31:24f.). This was acclaimed, 'the book of the Law of Yahweh found in the temple,' which induced Josiah's reformation (2 Ki. 22f.). But as the final volume of the Torah, Moses' creation, that statement in Dt. 31:24f. came to be understood as covering the whole sacred volume. This book had indeed heavenly origin according to later thought; it is identified with the divine Wisdom (Ecclus. 24, n. b. v. 23). The tradition is succinctly summed up in the introductory paragraph of the Mishnaic tractate *Pirke Aboth*: 'Moses received the Torah from Sinai, and delivered it to Joshua, and Joshua to the elders, and the elders to the prophets, and the prophets to the men of the Great Synagogue.' The book of David itself is claimed to be a copy of a divine book, 'inscribed in the document of truth' (*ib.* 10: 21).

For the Christian Church its Lord was the Word of God, superior as a living Man to any book. Yet the Church fully retained the Jewish reverence for the elder Scriptures, and continued them by true genetic descent with a new volume. Just as the history of Moses and his law were fundamental to Judaism, so the life of Jesus and His words had to be recorded for the faith in that historic event. To the Gospels were added books of His apostles and other recognized teachers, and the result was a compilation of Scripture, climaxing, in part annulling or differently interpreting, the elder volume, but retaining it as the written revelation of God. And such has been the dominant, popular Christian view of revelation. For our religious problems there comes to mind the reply of the Lord to the inquiring lawyer (Lk. 10:25ff.): 'What is written in the Law? How readest thou?'

But there is a medium of revelation exhibited in the Bible other than those of lawgivers, seers and prophets, moralists, apostles and evangelists. This is the Hebrew poet's discovery of the marvel and the beauty of God's creation — what we call Nature — and the harmony of it all. I may repeat what I have earlier published, but in English and only in part, an extract from the writings of the great German philosophical scientist, Alexander von Humboldt (see Bibliography). 'The Semitic or Aramaic nations in the oldest and most honorable records of their poetic feeling and creative fancy show us proofs of a deep feeling for nature . . . It is a characteristic note of the nature poetry of the Hebrews that, as reflection of monotheism, it embraces the whole of the universe in its unity, at once the life of the world and the brilliant stretches of heaven. . . . Nature is not pictured as something existing by itself, glorified through its own beauty; to the Hebrew singer it appears always in its bearing upon a higher, dominating spiritual power. Nature is made for, ordered for him, the living expression of the presence of God in the operations of the

world of sense.' He proceeds to cite as an example Psalm 104, as 'a picture of the whole Cosmos'. In a word this poetry of nature is not concerned with detached phenomena of nature, the gentle and the fearful, as in Classical literature, but is a recognition of the harmony of God's creation, in which the elements of sun, moon, planets, the deeps, the earth, all living things take their choric parts, to which man's hymnody is the inspired, melodious response.

In the first chapter of the Bible there is given, for the first time in letters, an orderly, as it were scientific account of beginnings (Gen. 1: 1), creation, with man as its climax. God is an artist: 'He saw everything that He had made, and lo, it was very fair' (as the Greek translates the adjective). The same expression of satisfaction is put in the mouth of the artist when he has finished his graven image (Is. 41: 7, cf. 44: 17ff.). God's autocratic power over the things of Nature, with the exceptions of man's gross disobedience, is declared throughout the early story, as in the Deluge, at the Red Sea, the crossing of the Jordan, and so with consistency subsequently, as in Elijah's experiences. There are no rival Hadads of the storm, Plutos of the deep to contest His sway, as in the Pagan mythology. And while the Gentiles feared Nature, invented all sorts of gods, godlets, demons, jinns, by which to explain its various and warring forces, and to which severally proper propitiations should be made, the one God, Lord of heaven and earth, in one title Yahweh Sabaoth is the accountable force throughout. (The one exception is the mythological tale of the intercourse of 'the sons of God', i.e. deities, with the lovely 'daughters of men', Gen. 6:1ff.). But this Hebrew conception did not remain merely a matter of dogma. It impregnated poets and philosophers, but not as with 'it is written', and 'so says the Book,' for they found for themselves the revelation of the Glory of God, His manifestation in all His works, from the courses of the heavenly bodies to the

humbler and yet as marvelous details of this earth. This is announced in the seraphic hymn heard by Isaiah in his vision in the temple (Is. 6): 'Holy, holy, holy, Yahweh Sebaoth! The whole earth is the fulness of His Glory.' All these wonders of Nature are depicted as forming a universal chorus of praise in Psalm 148, in which as *finale* all human appear, from kings to children, capped by the praise of His saints. The chorus of the congregation is not sole, it is auxiliary to the harmonies of the universe. Such poets are the distant predecessors of our Wordsworth and Tennyson (the latter's 'Higher Pantheism'). And just as these poets were Christians, brought up in the Church, and yet speak not in the terms of dogma, but discover for themselves the fascination of Nature as the revelation of the one God, so the Hebrew poets, as 'sons of the Law', but not as rabbis, were given vision of the harmony of the works of the one Lord, in which He, as master workman, also rejoices (Ps. 104: 31).

At times by a hang-over from ancient religion the personalization of the phenomena of Nature is rapturously kept up. In archaic language Deborah sings (Jud. 5: 20):

'From heaven fought the stars,

From their courses fought against Sisera.'

Similarly all ye gods are bidden to 'worship Him' (Ps. 97: 7), and so the sons of God are bidden (29:1, cf. 89:7) to 'ascribe glory to Yahweh'. (For the usual translation see the EVV and marginal notes.) And as observed above the same Psalm (29) presents 'the Voice of God' as operating physically, 'breaking the cedars of Lebanon,' and so forth. Only a few of these Nature Psalms may be adduced. Psalm 19:1-6 (vv. 7ff. have been attached, as a praise of the Law).

'The heavens record the glory of God,

And the firmament His handiwork.

Day to day uttereth speech,

And night to night showeth knowledge.

No speech and no words,
Not heard is their voice —

In all the earth hath gone forth their voice [Heb. "line"],
And at the end of the world are their words.'

This heavenly language of the spheres is not heard and understood by the uninspired.

'In them hath He set a tabernacle for the sun,
And he like a bridegroom goeth forth from his chamber,
Rejoicing like a hero to run his course.'

This is indeed a mythological survival, but for the poet the sun is the glorifier of God. V. 6 continues with description of the sun's circuit from earth's end to end.

Psalm 104. This Ode of Creation, eulogized by von Humboldt, presents a panorama of Nature, and not only the major phenomena, light (with which God 'covers Himself as with a garment,' He is not enveloped in utter darkness!), winds, fire, thunder, waters, but also, and with delicate touch, the wild beasts and wild asses, that drink of the springs, the perching and singing birds, the grass for the cattle.

'The herbage for the labor of man,
To bring food out of the earth,
And wine that gladdens man's heart,
Oil to make his face shine,

And bread to strengthen the human heart.'

Then the poet's eye turns to the cedars of Lebanon (not Israel's possession), where he discerns the birds, and the nesting of the stork in the high trees, the wild goats and the conies, finding their refuge in the high mountains and rocks. The night with its moon is set for the beasts of the forest, 'the young lions roaring after their prey, seeking their food from God.' That is their season; at sundown 'they lie down in their dens.' Then comes the day for man, who 'goeth forth to his work and his labor until the evening.' The poet breaks out:

'O Yahweh, how manifold are Thy works,

In wisdom hast thou made them all.'

Then the singer looks forth on ocean's waters, and, as though pointing with his finger, announces: 'This is the sea, great and broad', full of 'moving life', small and great animals, with man-made 'ships', and above all the great monster of the deep, 'Leviathan, whom Thou hast formed to play with' — the beast is God's sport animal.⁸ Upon this panoramic revelation of God in Nature the odist for his conclusion 'rejoices in Yahweh' (vv. 33ff.), with an intrusion invoking a curse upon 'the sinners' and 'the wicked'. This is a disturbing aftermath for the modern reader. But to that devout mind human sin is the vexatious element in God's world, and so for all subsequent theology based on faith in the One Righteous God. The splendid Hymn to Zeus by Cleanthes (early third century, B. C. — given by Oates in his book noted in the Bibliography, pp. 591f.) makes his excursus on 'the wicked, who spurn the voice of the One Word throughout all creation.' And Bishop Reginald Heber in his hymn, 'From Greenland's icy mountains', after viewing the glories of Nature adds:

'Where every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile.'

Ecclus. 42:15-33 is a striking parallel ode in praise of God's creation and its many details. The original Hebrew of this chapter and of the major portion of that book has now been recovered and published.

Psalm 8. This is a paean complementing the prosaic, 'scientific' story of creation in Gen. 1, with glory to God and wonder over the marvel of man's primacy.

'When I see Thy heavens, Thy fingers' work,
The moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained,
What is the human that Thou mindest him,
And the son of man that Thou accountest him?
Yet Thou hast made him little lower than Deity,
And with glory and honor crowned him.'

There follow details of man's dominion over God's creation: 'all things under his feet, sheep and oxen and wild beasts, the fowl of the air and the fish of the sea.' The introductory exclamation of the hymn is repeated as *finale*: 'O Yahweh, our Lord, how noble is Thy name in all the earth!' It is a hymn to the glory of God for the marvel of man. The night was the time of its inspiration. The later very introspective Psalm 139 with the poet's marvel over his own formation in the womb has been noticed at length in Chapter VI.

Also the marvels of Nature occupy the attention of the philosophical thinkers, to whose mind they are 'past finding out' Job 9:10. The Wise Man of Proverbs draws a moral lesson from the ant — an early entomological observation! (6:6ff.):

'Go to the ant, thou sluggard,
Consider her ways and be wise,
Which having no judge,
Overseer or ruler,
Provideth her bread in the summer,
And gathereth her food at the harvest.'

He presents later at length the marvels of Nature:

'Three things there are too wonderful for me:
Yea, four that I know not:
The way of an eagle in the air,
The way of a serpent on a rock,
The way of a ship amidst the sea,
And the way of a man with a maid.'

For the inclusion of 'a ship' among these fascinating creatures cf. Ps. 104:25f. He resumes the observation of Nature in vv. 24ff.:

'Four things there are, little ones of earth,
Yet they are wiser than the wise [with slight correction]:
The ants are a folk not strong,
Yet they provide food in the summer.

Conies are a folk not stout,
Yet they set in the rock their home.
The locusts have no king,
Yet they go forth all of them in array.
The lizard grasps with hands,
Yet she is in kings' palaces.'

In the next section there are listed four animals, 'stately in their march', the lion, the — [? EVV greyhound], the he-goat, the king. It is of interest that man is included in these lists of animated creatures.

Chapters 38-41 of Job express the divine challenge to man's science. 'Yahweh answered Job out of the whirlwind,' and asks him what he knows about it all, the heavens and the seas, the creatures from Behemoth (the crocodile) and Leviathan, down through the lower orders, all described with naturalistic detail. Job is overwhelmed (ch. 42), as indeed all wise men must be before such marvels. For wonder is the beginning of science.

In the New Testament the scene of human society shifts for the most part from the countryside to the city, following the trend of Graeco-Roman civilization. Paul, its most extensive contributor, was proud of being 'a citizen of no mean city'. Only the Gospels, the lives of Jesus, preserve the traditional panorama of Nature. Unlike Paul He came from a small country town, whence, according to Rabbi Nathanael, no good thing might be expected (Jn. 1:46). His life is redolent with the atmosphere of highland and valley, of lake and river. He was born in the little town of Bethlehem, with 'the shepherd boy. He was baptized by John in the river Jordan, 'in the wilderness of Judah', and remained in the heights of that wilderness for His temptation. He returned to Galilee, and 'dwelt in Capernaum by the lake of Galilee.' Walking one day there by the lake He found two brothers, Peter and Andrew, 'casting a net into the lake, for they were fishers'; he called

them. 'Come after Me, and I will make you fishers of men, His first parabolic utterance, and one drawn from the life of man in Nature. This series of events as narrated consecutively in Mt. 3, 4 (compare the parallels) is typical of His out-of-door life. With His disciples He walks over the whole country, Galilee, Samaria, Judah, Trans-Jordan. Only once is He represented as riding, in His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, but on a peaceful ass (Mt. 21:4ff.). In His last visit to Jerusalem He lodged not there but in the small town of Bethany (21:17; 26:6), He taught His disciples on the Mount of Olives (24:3ff.), and His last quiet consort with the apostles was at Gethsemane in the same heights (26:36ff.). But the holy metropolis was the place of His doom.

Hence may be understood the wealth of His teachings from Nature and the life of man in that environment. For Him Nature was the Wisdom of God for the instruction of the children of men, in this following a constant theme of the ancient Scriptures. In Mt. 6:21ff. are given congenial aphorisms of this Lover of Nature. 'Behold the birds of heaven, that they sow not, nor reap, nor gather into barns, and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not of much more value than they? . . . Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin. Yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothe the herbage of the field . . . shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?'

The Gospel of Matthew presents a series of His teachings from Nature. There are the parables of the sower and the seed, uttered by the lakeside (13:1ff.); of the good seed and the tares (vv. 24ff., cf. 36ff.); of the mustard seed (vv. 31f.); of the operation of leaven (v. 33); of the net cast into the sea, catching fish good and bad (vv. 47ff.); of the landed proprietor and his laborers (20:1ff.); of the owner of a vineyard and his rebellious workmen (21:23ff.). The Gospel of John

gives the parable of the Good Shepherd and his sheep (10:1ff.), and that of the pruning of the vines (15:1ff.).

The last book of the Bible foresees 'a new heaven and a new earth,' when 'the sea shall be no more' (Rev. 21:1ff.); the exile on Patmos had had enough of the deep. The centre of his vision is 'the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband,' on the details of which sight he dwells with fascination. But there survives for him the strain of the primitive theme of the Garden of Eden (22:1ff.). 'He showed me a river of water, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb. In the midst of the street and on either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve manners of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.' This 'tree of life' is the counterpoise to that mischievous 'tree of knowledge of good and evil', which was the undoing of primitive Paradise. In the new Paradise, as sung to in a sixteenth century hymn:

'Thy gardens and thy goodly walks

Continually are green,

Where grow such sweet and pleasant flowers

As nowhere else are seen.'

The Bible concludes with the prospect of Paradise Regained.

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In references to English Bible AV denotes the Authorized Version, RV the American Revision, EVV their agreement.

NOTES

1. The title 'the Law' comes down to us through the Greek and Latin versions. The Hebrew means primarily (divine) 'direction, instruction', and this connotation is more sympathetic for the non-legal mind.
2. The usual British and American editions of the Bible do not include the Apocrypha. This corpus can be found in the enlarged edition of the English Revision, 1895, and is to be had most conveniently in a special offprint of the same date. The Preface of the latter print gives an interesting account of the labors of the three Committees that worked upon the revision. It may be noted that the Anglican Church makes extensive use of the Apocrypha in its Lectionary, and hence its lectern Bibles always contain that volume.
3. Among the anecdotes of the remarkable Semitic memory for family genealogy may be cited one given by John Van Ess in his *Meet the Arab* (1943), 67: 'I once asked a youngster whose son he was.' He proceeded to name them. At the thirteenth he hesitated and his companion, not of his clan, prompted him and he thereupon went on to the fifteenth.'
4. The following citation from a distinguished historian of antiquity, with its eulogy and criticism of Hebrew historical writing, is pertinent; U. von Wilamowitz-Mollendorf, *Greek Historical Writing* (Oxford 1908), pp. 8f.: 'The Old Testament . . . in many narratives — for instance in those of the reigns of David or Ahab, and earlier in the wonderful story of Abimelech in the Book of Judges —

contains descriptions of a truth and fullness which no Greek has surpassed. It is possible enough that other Semites possessed some similar faculty, we find it in the Arabs immediately after Mohammed. The rebellion which cost the life of Othman, the third successor of the prophet, is described to us more vividly than the murder of Cæsar. And yet all the ancient Semites are lacking in exactly that quality through which the Greeks made the writing of history into conscious art. They have historical writing, but they have no historian.' An exception to this denial is Josephus inbred however in the Hellenistic culture.

5. Since writing these remarks I have come upon a similar statement made by Miss Lichtenstädter in her book on Women in the old Arabian life. 'The same impartiality with which they [the heroic episodes concerned] relate any event, avoiding alike extravagant laudation of one hero and the extreme depreciation of another, is observed in the narrative about women; the narrator tells these stories in the same objective way as those about men, neither emphasizing their virtues nor exaggerating their faults'.
6. The lawyer's combination of the love for God and neighbor has its precedent in the Jewish book of Jubilees (existent now only in Ethiopic). It presents (7:20) Noah's summary for his children of the divine law: 'to bless the Creator, to honor father and mother, to love one's neighbor, and to keep one's self free from unchastity, impurity and all unrighteousness.'
7. Many favorite Christian hymns still remain anonymous. Many more would be so but for the researches of hymnologists.
8. This is the necessary interpretation, as against the incorrect rendering, 'to play therein'. For the theme cf. Job 41:5, where, in reference to the same Leviathan, the author inquires of his reader: 'Wilt thou play with him as a bird,

or bind him for thy maidens?' In the mythological poems of Syrian Ras Shamra (of the early fourteenth century B.C., in a dialect approximating the Hebrew), the deity Baal is epically represented as in combat slaying Lotan (= Leviathan), 'the coiling serpent with seven heads' (cf. Ps. 74: 14). In that mythology the god of order had to destroy such an awful monster. To our poet's thought it is the one Deity's plaything. The comparison humorously points the distinction of Israel's religion from those of Paganism. Israel's God 'rejoices in His works', all of them (v. 31).

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